

Examples of General Education Outcomes Statements and Course Criteria

We have gathered some examples of General Education outcomes statements and course criteria that are already in use at individual colleges and universities, in Oregon and elsewhere, or statewide in Colorado. We have collected only examples that correspond to the 6 General Education subdivisions within the AA/OT (Associate of Arts/Oregon Transfer) degree and OTM (Oregon Transfer Module), and have organized them according to those subdivisions:

- Writing**
- Oral Communication**
- Mathematics**
- Arts and Letters**
- Social Science**
- Science**

What do we mean by “outcomes” and “criteria”?

Outcomes statements are broad. They describe the habits of mind, skills, or kinds of insight that we want students to acquire, and be able to use, as a result of taking courses in a particular area.

Criteria identify the characteristics of courses that we think have the best chance of producing the desired outcomes for students.

This packet contains: **Outcomes Statements**

Writing

Eastern Oregon University: Be able to communicate effectively [through] ... analytical reading and academic writing in the diverse situations encountered as educated citizens; be able to communicate effectively using appropriate symbolic technological systems.

Lane Community College: Demonstrate effective writing skills through principles of clear thinking; awareness of audience; appropriate conventions of format, structure, and language; and clear thesis development.

Mt Hood Community College: Write effectively for personal, academic and career purposes.

Southern Oregon University: Communicate effectively in various ways: written, oral, and visual

- Use verbal and nonverbal techniques and conventions in ways appropriate to purpose and audience.
- Demonstrate inferential and evaluative comprehension of texts including literature, speeches, scripts, artifacts, music, media, and works of art
- Interpret and communicate purpose and cultural assumptions of authors, speakers, and artists
- Demonstrate mastery of Standard American English

Colorado State System: The general education requirement in communication is designed to help students:

- To develop the ability to use the English language effectively.
- To read and listen critically.
- To write with thoughtfulness, clarity, coherence, and persuasiveness.

The Oregon Writing and English Advisory Committee (OWEAC) has developed detailed recommendations for Composition Courses, which are included on pp 10-13 of this packet.

Oral Communication

Eastern Oregon University: Be able to communicate effectively by means of active listening, public speaking, collaborating ... in the diverse situations encountered as educated citizens; be able to adjust presentations according to subject, occasion, audience, and purpose.

Lane Community College: Demonstrate understanding and use of effective and respectful listening, interpersonal, small group/collaborative, and public communication skills among diverse populations.

Linn Benton Community College:

- Be able to recognize the value, application, and ethical responsibilities of the communication process.
- Construct clear messages.
- Interact with self confidence.
- Recognize the value and application of empathy.

Mt Hood Community College: Speak effectively for personal, academic and career purposes.

Southern Oregon University: Communicate effectively in various ways: written, oral, and visual

- Use verbal and nonverbal techniques and conventions in ways appropriate to purpose and audience.
- Demonstrate inferential and evaluative comprehension of texts including literature, speeches, scripts, artifacts, music, media, and works of art
- Interpret and communicate purpose and cultural assumptions of authors, speakers, and artists
- Demonstrate mastery of Standard American English

Colorado State System: The general education requirement in communication is designed to help students:

- To develop the ability to use the English language effectively.
- To read and listen critically.
- To write with thoughtfulness, clarity, coherence, and persuasiveness.

Mathematics

Eastern Oregon University: Be able to use mathematical abilities to solve problems and interpret quantitative information; Be able to communicate such analyses effectively through speaking, writing, and the use of graphics.

Lane Community College: Interpret, translate, and communicate quantitative information expressed in mathematical notation, graphs, charts, tables, symbols, or standard English

Interpret and make inferences from data; estimate outcomes where appropriate.

Mt Hood Community College:

- Apply appropriate quantitative skills for personal, academic and career purposes.
- Analyze, interpret and represent problem situations using numeric, graphic, algebraic, geometric and verbal models.
- Create, read and interpret tables and graphs in various real-world contexts.
- Determine if a solution is reasonable and independently verify the results.
- Clearly communicate a problem-solving process, results and conclusions using quantitative methods and correct mathematical syntax appropriate to level of study.

Southern Oregon University: Express and manipulate information and concepts through appropriate modes of reasoning

- Use mathematical symbols to represent real-world phenomena, answer questions based on linear and non-linear mathematical relationships, and express mathematical statements in plain language.
- Distinguish among facts, assumptions, and conclusions; use facts and assumptions to construct valid conclusions; apply theoretical constructs to explore the properties, behaviors, or identity of systems.

Colorado State System: The general education requirement in mathematics is designed to help students:

- Develop understanding of fundamental mathematical concepts and their applications.
- Develop a level of quantitative literacy that would enable them to make decisions and solve problems and which could serve as a basis for continued learning.

Arts and Letters

Eastern Oregon University: Be able to interpret aesthetic significance in an object, work, performance or experience through study and participation. Be able to demonstrate sensitivity to the arts as essential to a full life.

Linn Benton Community College:

- Be able to communicate an understanding of the cultural and/or historical contexts, connections with other disciplines, and relevance to their own lives.
- Understand the importance of self engagement, take responsibility for their own learning, and interact with others in a respectful manner.
- Analyze and evaluate using complex thinking.
- Be able to understand and appreciate creative works by engaging in their own creativity.

Southern Oregon University: Recognize human accomplishments in the creative and performing arts and understand the role of the humanities in clarifying individual and social values.

- Understand basic formal elements, principles, and compositional structures in cultural texts (e.g., theatre, media, music, language, literature).
- Understand the impact of cultural and historical factors on the creation and reception of texts (theater, media, music, language, literature).
- Understand how artistic and symbolic expressions reflect and influence individuals, cultures, and societies.

N.C. State University: Each course in the humanities category will provide instruction and guidance that help students to:

- Understand and engage in the human experience through the interpretation of human culture and artifacts (this objective must be the central focus of each humanities course); and
- Become aware of the act of interpretation itself as a critical form of knowing in the humanities; and
- Make academic arguments about the human experience using reasons and evidence for supporting those reasons that are appropriate to the humanities.

Colorado State System: The general education requirement in art and humanities is designed to help students:

- Recognize the different ways in which humans have perceived their world
- Deepen their understanding of how social, linguistic, religious, philosophical and historical circumstances shape the human environment

- Enhance their appreciation of the creative world
- Explore fundamental questions of value, meaning and modes of expression and creativity
- Investigate the cultural character and literatures of the human experience
- Learn to approach problems with greater awareness of their moral dimensions and ethical consequences

Social Sciences

Eastern Oregon University: Be able to demonstrate an understanding of environmental, health, religious, temporal, social, political, economic, and geographic concepts. Be able to develop informed judgments about the past by gathering relevant information, by placing it in context, by interpreting it and by using it to draw inferences about contemporary events and to plan for the future.

Lane Community College:

- Describe core aspects of today's integrated global society, including historical perspective, cross-cultural variation, gender issues, as well as group function, interaction and change.
- Understand diverse roots of our nation and world civilizations

Linn Benton Community College:

- Be able to recognize and articulate the interplay between social and/or natural forces and individuals.
- Use analytical thinking to draw reasonable conclusions from observations involving multiple sources.
- Be able to synthesize diverse perspectives that can be expressed in a coherent and applicable manner.
- Understand the importance of self-engagement, take responsibility for their own learning, and interact with others in a respectful manner.

Mt Hood Community College: Develop an understanding of the values, behaviors or viewpoints of people of diverse backgrounds within the contexts of human experiences.

Southern Oregon University: Understand fundamental concepts of social science and the interconnections among social institutions, values, individuals, and groups.

- Understand connections between individuals and social, economic, and/or political institutions.
- Understand current and historical perspectives relating to contemporary issues.
- Understand the interactions of and the competing demands upon our natural and social environments and resources.

N.C. State University: Each course in the social science category will provide instruction and guidance that help students to:

- 1. Understand at least one of the following: human behavior, mental processes, organizational processes, or institutional processes; and
- 2. Understand how social scientific methods may be applied to the study of human behavior, mental processes, organizational processes, or institutional processes; and
- 3. Use theories or concepts of the social sciences to understand real-world problems, including the underlying origins of such problems.

Colorado State System: The general education requirements in social sciences are designed to help students acquire a broad foundation in social science knowledge and ability to apply this understanding to contemporary problems and issues. Specifically the social science requirement helps students:

- Gain insight into the methods of social sciences,
- Understand historical and social frameworks,
- Understand how individuals relate to the social world, past and present.

Science/Math/Computer Science

Eastern Oregon University: Be able to understand how observation and interpretation of phenomena in a systematic fashion form the basis for scientific inquiry.

Lane Community College:

- Apply the scientific method, incorporating the appropriate mathematical skills or processes as needed in various problem solving contexts
- Determine whether conclusions or solutions are reasonable, using inductive and deductive reasoning
- Understand fundamental concepts of physical and life sciences

Southern Oregon University: Understand the fundamental concepts, methods, and applications of the Natural Sciences and their impact on human experience.

- Understand major principles and theories of the Natural Sciences.
- Understand positive and negative effects of science and technology on human experience.
- Apply scientific and quantitative approaches to societal issues.

N.C. State University: Each course in the natural sciences will provide instruction and guidance that help the student to use methods and processes of science in testing hypotheses, solving problems and making decisions; and articulate, make inferences from, and apply to problem solving, scientific concepts, principles, laws and theories.

Colorado State system: Natural and physical sciences general education is designed to help students master scientific knowledge at a level that facilitates communication in an increasingly technological society, including:

- to instill a clear understanding of the basic scientific viewpoint
- to enable students to learn and use the scientific method
- to evaluate the impacts of science and technology on society
- to increase the level of science literacy

OWEAC Composition Recommendations (Final Draft)

The college first year English Composition sequence prepares students for the writing, reading, and critical thinking they will do in college, in their careers, and in their lives as citizens.

The sequence introduces and develops the following:

Rhetoric: The art of presenting specific material to a specific audience in order to achieve a specific purpose in both informal and formal contexts; including the analysis of writing and speaking situations by subject, purpose, intended audience, and tone; as well as the use of strategies such as comparison, definition, description, process, etc. both as ways to think and as ways to organize material.

Writing as Process: The use of planning, drafting, revising, and editing in order to produce texts.

Critical Thinking and Reading: The exercise of analysis, evaluation, and judgment to determine quality and trustworthiness of source material, validity and strength of reasons, and the form and presentation of materials used and produced by students.

Reflection: Self-assessment of writing processes and rhetorical choices made in the contexts of personal and public writings.

The sequence is divided into the following three courses:

- WR 121: This course teaches rhetoric, the writing process, critical thinking and reading at the college level while focusing on academic writing such as the essay and critical summary.
- WR 122: This course continues the focus of WR 121 with the added emphasis of persuasion and argument supported by external research.
- WR 123: This course continues the focus of WR 121 and 122 and emphasizes research: framing a research question, formulating a research strategy, finding and evaluating sources, and relating sources to each other and to the student's own ideas on the topic. This course also emphasizes citing, documenting, and integrating source material into the student's own text.

Learning about writing, like writing itself, is a recursive process. Students will continually need to revisit ideas and skills learned throughout the course sequence. This overview and the specific recommendations that follow do not exhaustively describe the courses. Rather, this document articulates guidelines and minimum curricular expectations for three first-year English Composition courses. Learning to write is a complex, individualized process which takes place over time with continued practice.

Undergraduate writing education provides the basis for the development of a literate citizenry and work force capable of reflective and critical inquiry.

OWEAC Recommendations (WR 121)

Writing Process	Purpose and Audience	Thesis	Organization	Rhetorical Methods	Development and Support	Critical Thinking and Reading	Conventions and Format
<p>Students will use the writing process: inventing, drafting, revising, and editing toward a final draft. At the invention stage, students will find a topic and develop and write on that topic from their own perspective. During drafting, students will employ processes and strategies which fit purpose, context, and audience. In revision, students will evaluate the effectiveness of their work with peer responders, tutors, and/or instructors, demonstrating a focused process of improvement from early to final drafts. Finally, students will edit for correctness and clarity.</p>	<p>Students will write expository essays to accomplish a clear purpose by adopting appropriate voice, tone, and level of formality as well as organizational pattern(s). Students will produce academic writing addressed to an audience broader than the student writer or the instructor.</p>	<p>Students will develop a controlling idea in each completed essay. The thesis must be clear and specific in order to express a focused approach to ideas, insights, and/or applications.</p>	<p>Students will organize their essays with an introduction, logically arranged body paragraphs that develop the thesis, and a conclusion. Connections between sections, paragraphs, and sentences will be clear. Organization will reflect the scope and nature of the thesis.</p>	<p>Students will demonstrate control of a variety of sentence types to achieve clear and fluent writing. Students will develop paragraphs and make transitions aimed at making their writing more accessible to readers.</p>	<p>Students will provide adequate explanatory details and reasons to develop the thesis. Students will select and use appropriate techniques and materials to support their thesis, which may include rhetorical strategies, concrete detail, sensory and narrative detail, dialogue, summary of outside sources, synthesis of information from sources, and a conclusion.</p>	<p>Students will look analytically at a text or situation as part of forming their own interpretation, supporting it with rational and logical thinking. Students will demonstrate critical reading skills such as inference, judgment, and conclusion.</p>	<p>Students will demonstrate the ability to use standard academic English in order to address an academic audience. Sentence structures will be correct and chosen for effectiveness. Students will demonstrate an appropriate variety of sentence structures. A few fragments may appear when stylistically appropriate. There will be few clichés; most idiomatic expressions will be used correctly. Students will be able to use basic sentence punctuation correctly. There will be few mistakes in spelling or in the use of homonyms. Final drafts of essays will be typed, will be double spaced, and will include an appropriate heading and a title. Students will demonstrate the ability to summarize, paraphrase, and quote passages from sources. Students will be introduced to MLA (or APA or Chicago) format, citation, and documentation.</p>
<p>Workload:</p>	<p>Students will write 4-5 polished essays of more than 2 pages each. For each essay, students will submit evidence of using a writing process. The last essay should be at least 4 pages.</p>						

OWEAC Recommendations (WR 122)

Writing Process	Purpose and Audience	Thesis	Organization	Rhetorical Methods	Development and Support	Critical Thinking and Reading	Conventions and Format
<p>In working through the writing process, students will generate ideas from texts and demonstrate the ability to evaluate those texts they choose to include in their final drafts for sound reasoning and validity of evidence.</p>	<p>Students will write persuasive or argumentative essays to accomplish a clear purpose by adopting appropriate voice, tone, and level of formality as well as organizational pattern(s). Students will anticipate and prepare for reactions to their text by an audience outside the classroom.</p>	<p>Students will include a thesis or claim in each completed essay that identifies the essay as a form of argument or analysis.</p>	<p>Students will use patterns of reasoning and formal logic in organizing their essays with an introduction, body, and conclusion. Students will organize support for a particular audience and for a particular purpose, such as argument, analysis, synthesis, or evaluation.</p>	<p>Students will use appropriate rhetorical strategies and reasons to support the thesis or claim. Students will employ rhetorical strategies for their own purposes, such as analysis, persuasion, argument, evaluation, and synthesis for a variety of audiences in order to develop the thesis and effectively organize the essay.</p>	<p>Students will use resources for their own purposes. These may include, but are not limited to, using appropriate outside sources, presenting good reasons, showing logical relationships, clarifying inferences, choosing appropriate language and using the most convincing evidence for the target audience.</p>	<p>Students will critically analyze texts and/or situations and not accept at face value what they see. Students will adopt the habit of looking closely and questioning not only the reliability of opinions and statements from sources, but also their own assumptions and opinions. Students will identify, evaluate, and use the elements of argument. Students will distinguish between observation, fact, inference, etc. Students will demonstrate practical application of concepts and skills.</p>	<p>Same as WR 121 but with more control. Students will effectively cite and document a variety of sources.</p>
<p>Workload:</p>	<p>Students will write 4-5 polished essays of more than 3 pages each. For each essay, students will submit evidence of using a writing process. The last essay should be at least 5 pages.</p>						

OWEAC Recommendations (WR123)

Writing Process	Purpose and Audience	Thesis	Organization	Rhetorical Methods	Development and Support	Critical Thinking and Reading	Conventions and Format
<p>Students will demonstrate successful use of the research process: writing research proposals, formulating incisive questions, conducting library and/or field research, taking careful notes, and compiling an annotated bibliography or review of literature. Students will evaluate the quality of information gained through primary and/or secondary research reliability, validity, and soundness of reasoning. Students will work through the writing process to produce a final draft that includes in-text citations and a bibliography.</p>	<p>Students will write a research paper which will attempt to persuade an informed and educated reader or assert a position taken by the writer. Students will use appropriate voice, tone, and formality. Students will select the appropriate documentation style (MLA, APA, or Chicago) for the topics they have chosen.</p>	<p>Students will write a research-based project with a clear thesis or claim that is arguable, unified, and sufficiently narrow.</p>	<p>Students will demonstrate the ability to organize longer research papers with an introduction, logically arranged body paragraphs that develop the thesis and synthesize information from a variety of sources, and a conclusion. Connections between sections, paragraphs, and sentences will be clear. Organization will reflect the scope and nature of the thesis.</p>	<p>Students will use appropriate rhetorical strategies as needed to support an argumentative or position-based thesis or claim in a research-based paper.</p>	<p>Students will develop a thesis or claim based on the evaluation and synthesis of primary and secondary sources. Students will thoroughly develop and support the thesis with a balanced and insightful presentation of evidence. Using quotations, summaries, and/or paraphrases, students will integrate their ideas and source material, being careful to differentiate source materials from their own ideas and carefully credit sources.</p>	<p>Students will research and synthesize disparate sources. Students will weigh various conclusions based on the evidence presented in order to build a credible research-based discussion of their own. Students' writing will evaluate not only the reliability but also the adequacy of sources and information.</p>	<p>Same as WR 122 but with more control. Students will demonstrate mastery of citation and documentation. Students will include index, pagination, and appropriately integrated visuals in their projects.</p>
<p>Workload:</p>		<p>Students will write at least 15 pages of polished research-based writing. Students will submit evidence of using a writing process.</p>					