



GENESEO

COLLEGE SENATE BULLETIN

State University of New York at Geneseo
College of Arts and Sciences

Bulletin Vol. 60, No. 06

Pages 66-72

2 December 2015

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Preamble to GLOBE

Geneseo Learning Outcomes for Baccalaureate Education: A Framework for Building and Assessing a Holistic Student Experience at Geneseo

This framework for a Geneseo learning experience is designed to be a guide for the development of a renewed curriculum that will inspire and inform students, faculty, staff, and our community to creatively shape life in the 21st Century. Broad in scope, high in aspiration, but specific in application, the GLOBE will require that we engage in reshaping our learning community in ways that respond to its integrative vision. This work will be undertaken in the context of President Battles' inaugural address with its questions of excellence, access, diversity, global engagement, and financial sustainability, and in harmony with an ambitious strategic planning process looking forward to Geneseo's sesquicentennial year of 2021.

History and Context

In the late 1970s and the early 1980s, the faculty at Geneseo revised the general education program by adopting a common core for all students. The goals of this reform were to increase the rigor of the courses in the general education program, to expand the breadth of each student's educational experience, to include courses in critical reasoning, and to increase the coherence of the core, particularly with the new Humanities sequence and laboratories in the Natural Sciences. Today our task is to reinvigorate those goals for the current generation. Over the past thirty years the general education program has had some notable improvements and additions, but the basic shape has remained the same. There have also been some changes due to requirements handed down from SUNY. On our own campus, discussions about redesigning our curriculum have been occurring since the formation of the Curriculum Task Force in 2007.

Revisiting the goals and requirements of General Education – and of a Geneseo education as a whole – parallels the larger, nationwide conversation about the role of higher education in our culture. In 2004 the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U) and the Carnegie Foundation released their “Statement on Integrative Learning.” (http://webshare.northseattle.edu/IS/readings/a_statement_on_integrative_learn.htm) This document argues that “fostering students’ abilities to integrate learning – across courses, over time, and between campus and community life – is one of the most important goals and challenges of higher education.” AAC&U went on in 2005 to found the LEAP (Liberal Education America’s Promise <http://www.aacu.org/leap>) initiative, in which Geneseo and COPLAC (Council of Public Liberal Arts Colleges) are active participants.

Integrative Learning deliberately makes connections between classes, fields, and academic and co-curricular life, with the end goal of graduating students who can respond to challenges and new knowledge in a productive manner. In other institutions of higher learning, this charge from AAC&U has generated a range of ambitious expectations for undergraduate education. We believe these ideas deserve serious consideration. The challenge, as always, at a primarily undergraduate school with a liberal arts focus like Geneseo, is to balance the goals of career-preparation with broad exposure to ideas and ways of thinking which will produce engaged, responsible and thoughtful citizens of the world. A Geneseo education is rigorous, rich in both broad and specialized knowledge and thus not reducible to a menu of courses and credits. As such, this statement of learning outcomes is not intended to translate into a one-to-one correspondence to a set of course requirements. Responding to the general trend of “educating

the whole person,” we re-examine the relationship of the core requirements to the major and, for the first time, consider the place of co-curriculum in creating a unique and challenging experience for Geneseo students.

The baccalaureate learning outcomes described in this document are designed to guide the entire Geneseo education and to provide thorough assessment quality evidence of learning. (See AAC&U’s VALUE Rubrics for some approaches to assessment (<https://www.aacu.org/value-rubrics>). What follows is a framework for building and assessing a holistic student experience that supports the College’s mission, which “combines a rigorous curriculum, transformational learning experiences, and a rich co-curricular life to create a learning-centered environment. The entire college community works together to develop socially responsible citizens with skills and values important to the pursuit of an enriched life and success in the world.”

Contributors

Many have been involved in the development of this framework. In addition to the members of the original 2007 Curriculum Task Force, members of the General Education Committee for the past three years, and those who participated in a variety of open forums and discussions on curriculum, the following groups have provided input:

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Geneseo Learning Outcomes for Baccalaureate Education: A Framework for Building and Assessing a Holistic Student Experience at Geneseo

Geneseo Mission Statement: *SUNY Geneseo, nationally recognized as a center of excellence in undergraduate education, is a public liberal arts college with selected professional and master's level programs. It combines a rigorous curriculum, transformational learning experiences, and a rich co-curricular life to create a learning-centered environment. The entire college community works together to develop socially responsible citizens with skills and values important to the pursuit of an enriched life and success in the world.*

The Geneseo learning outcomes for baccalaureate education described below are designed to guide the entire Geneseo education. Inspired by the AAC&U's statement on Liberal Education and America's Promise, this document provides the curricular and co-curricular foundation for students to achieve an integrative education that supports the College's mission.

Broad and Specialized Knowledge

The Geneseo curriculum introduces a broad range of methodologies, concepts, and problems through a rigorous general education program and fosters the pursuit of deep and complex understanding through engagement with academic majors and minors. The college mission to promote "pursuit of an enriched life" and "success in the world" requires that students acquire, use, and communicate knowledge; practice intellectual flexibility; and investigate domains beyond their professional interests.

Learning Outcomes:

Students will demonstrate:

1. Broad Knowledge

To develop broad knowledge of Physical and Life Sciences; Behavioral and Social Sciences; Arts, Languages, and Humanities.

2. Specialized Knowledge

To develop deep understanding of a body of specialized knowledge.

Intellectual and Practical Skills

In support of Geneseo's institutional mission as "a center of excellence in undergraduate education," college values stress "high standards for intellectual inquiry and scholarly achievement." Geneseo prepares students for twenty-first century challenges through the development of intellectual and practical skills that transcend disciplinary boundaries and are applicable throughout their lives.

Learning Outcomes:

students will demonstrate:

1. Critical Thinking

To formulate questions or frame issues in ways that permit examination or investigation; to explicate and evaluate the assumptions underlying the claims of self and others; to establish and pursue systematic and valid methods for collecting and evaluating relevant evidence; to draw soundly reasoned and appropriately limited conclusions on the basis of evidence; to relate conclusions to a larger body of knowledge.

2. Communication

To demonstrate proficiency in English and skill in another spoken language; to compose written texts that effectively inform or persuade, following Standard English conventions and practices of academic disciplines; to engage in discussion, debate, and public speaking in a manner suitable to the listener(s) and the discourse; to be mindful of the interplay between rhetorical style and purpose.

3. Quantitative, Computational, and Symbolic Reasoning

To construct and interpret mathematical, computational, or symbolic depictions of information (e.g., equations, algorithms, graphs, diagrams); to generate accurate calculations or plausible estimates; to draw valid conclusions from quantitative evidence or computational or symbolic results; to clearly communicate the conclusions drawn from quantitative, computational, or symbolic analysis.

4. Informational and Digital Literacy

To work in information-rich and digital environments; to identify when information and data are needed to support claims; to search effectively and efficiently for relevant information, evidence, and data; to evaluate the credibility of information obtained; to share and cite information and ideas that inspire or support one's own work responsibly and ethically, respecting privacy and intellectual property rights; to use digital tools to create, communicate, and collect information for the benefit of others.

5. Creativity and Creative Thinking

To produce scholarly or artistic work, independently or collaboratively, that makes inventive connections among existing forms and ideas; to engage divergent or contradictory perspectives; to transform existing ideas or solutions into new forms; to understand and articulate the relationship between individual creative work and wider contexts; to practice techniques for presenting and performing creative work.

6. Leadership and Collaboration

To engage others in developing collaborative solutions; to experiment, take risks, and learn from mistakes; to enable, encourage, and recognize contributions to collaborative efforts by all group members; to manage and share work fairly and respectfully; to envision, promote, consider, and respond to diverse viewpoints.

7. Diversity and Pluralism

To work effectively in a pluralistic society, recognizing and respecting diverse identities, beliefs, backgrounds, and life choices; to practice effective communication and collaboration across diverse communities and organizations; to critically reflect on the reasoning and impact of one's personal beliefs and actions.

8. Global Awareness and Engagement

To situate individual and community experiences in multiple historical contexts, global systems, and power relations; to assess interconnections among local and global systems; to apply global perspectives in addressing challenges and solving problems.

Integrative and Applied Learning

Geneseo's mission underscores an institutional commitment to "transformational learning experiences" and "a rich co-curricular life." Integrative learning fosters the ability to connect and combine knowledge and skills acquired through the curriculum and the co-curriculum to new complex situations within and beyond the college and to foster reflection on the ways that such knowledge is utilized. Such learning develops through such high-impact practices as international experiences, service and community-based learning, intensive research activities, internships, advocacy, learning communities, and capstone courses and projects.

Learning Outcomes:

Students will demonstrate:

1. Integrative Inquiry

To ask meaningful questions connecting personal experiences to academic study and co-curricular life; to synthesize multiple bodies of knowledge to address real-world problems and issues.

2. Application and Transfer

To adapt and apply skills, theories, and methods gained in one or more domains to new situations.

3. Reflection

To reflect upon changes in learning and outlook over time; to make personal, professional, and civic plans based on that self-reflection.