

**Report on Changes Made to Undergraduate Outcomes
Based on CCTL Event Feedback
General Education Advisory Committee
January 15, 2009**

The General Education Advisory Committee complied and reviewed feedback from the Nov. 21 CCTL event and made the following revisions to the proposed outcomes. Revised outcomes are attached. Feedback data is attached (see Appendix A-B).

1. Breadth and Lifelong Learning Objective

Summary of Feedback

- Calls for an expansion of “integration” or “transference” skills, outcomes 2-4 were redundant, more emphasis on research, and more clearly defined life-long learning objectives.

Changes Made

- Combined the three "methods and models" objectives (original #2-4) into one (new #3)
- Added an objective about learning fundamental principles from each field of knowledge (new #2)
- Added “research” and “theory” to #3
- Defined the lifelong learning objective with examples
- Added another lifelong learning type objective (new #6)

2. Inquiry and Critical Thinking Outcome

Summary of Feedback

- Some wanted more emphasis on “logic/science method,” others wanted additional emphasis on non-rational thought, e.g., mysticism, religion

Changes Made

- In #1, changed “analyzed” to “identify,” and in #2, added “evaluate.”
- *Comment:* Some feedback stated that this outcome privileged rational thinking over other types of thinking, but the committee felt this was a minority position
- *Comment:* Some feedback indicated there should be more emphasis on scientific method in this category but the committee felt this is addressed in the Breadth outcome.

3. Communication Outcome

Summary of Feedback

- Many calls to define "general academic literacy." Some wanted “teamwork” and “leadership” emphasized more. Some wanted “in English” mentioned.

Changes Made

- Defined general academic literacy in #1.
- Changed “different” to “various” in #5
- Changed “electronic” to “up-to-date” in #6
- *Comment:* The committee felt that objective #3 on collaboration addresses the notion of teamwork (it is also addressed under global/multicultural objective #5), and that “leadership” was added to the Breadth and Lifelong Learning outcome.
- *Comment:* Some comments thought “genre and conventions” in #2 was too technical, but after consideration the committee thought that these word choices were important terms to emphasize that students need to learn forms of communicating in a discipline (and that faculty have a responsibility to teach discipline-specific communication beyond the general academic literacy taught in freshman composition)

4. Global and Multicultural Outcome

Summary of Feedback

- A lot of vaguer, hard to assess language used; too much emphasis on “values” and “morals.”

Changes Made

- Used more concrete, assessable words:
 - changed “experience or interpret” to “respond to” #2,
 - #3, changed “experience or interpret” to “apply”
 - #4, deleted “display curiosity,” added “demonstrate”
- #1, deleted “geography” added “literature”
- #2, added other terms of difference, i.e., age, ability class, religion, politics, sexuality

5. Ethics and Citizenship Outcome

Summary of Feedback

- Heavy on citizenship, light on ethics. “Civic imagination” vague.

Changes Made

- Combined “citizenship” objectives 2-5, and expanded the one ethics objective into two
- #2, changed “explore” to “identify”
- #3, deleted “experience or interpret...”, focused more on sustainability
- #4, changed “learn” to “apply”
- Deleted #5 “engage in public discourse and exercise civic imagination”
- Expanded #6 (ethics) into new #5 and #6

Appendix A: Analysis of CCTL Events

FEEDBACK FROM CCTL EVENTS

(Compiled by Dr. Daniel McCollum, Associate Director of Assessment)

Issues addressed more than once in Powerful Undergraduate Experiences

- 1) Independent Research (4)
- 2) Well-prepared lectures (2)
- 3) Inspiring professor (2)
- 4) Conversations in class (2)
- 5) Community Experiences (2)
- 6) Identifying one's own outside learning experiences (2)

Topics addressed more than once in Activity One Feedback, Consensus & Differences, and Outcome Sheets

Intellectual Breadth and Lifelong Learning

- 1) fundamental learning should be emphasized (7)
- 2) need a definition of life-long learning (6)
- 3) transfer of knowledge should be considered (3)
- 4) life-long learning is underemphasized (3)
- 5) at least one objective is too vague (3)
- 6) Social Science is more than behavior (2)

Inquiry and Critical Thinking

- 1) science and quantitative skills should be a separate category (4)
- 2) perspective is biased toward rationalism (2)

Communication

- 1) language/definition of objectives is vague (20)
 - particularly "general academic literacy"
- 2) language of objectives is too broad (6)
- 3) using technologies/up-to date means should be included (5)
- 4) a leadership component should be included (3)
- 5) in English (3)
- 6) language of the objectives is too narrow (2)
- 7) assess-ability of the objectives is lacking (2)
- 8) the term oral should not be used (2)

Global/Multicultural

- 1) points of emphasis within goal should change (9)
 - too much emphasis on countries rather than cultures; add economics and politics; separate out literature and fine arts; add differences – age, religious, class, handicap; social justice does not belong here

- 2) can't see how to accomplish objectives/don't see a fit with disciplines/ majors (10)
- 3) study abroad (8)
- 4) dislike that outcome reflects value or moral (6)
- 5) curiosity cannot be measured (7)
- 6) experience social justice? (4)
- 7) curiosity is not genuine (2)
- 8) need definition for awareness (2)
- 9) entire outcome is not measurable (2)

Citizenship and Ethics

- 1) experience is not a good term for an objective or is not measurable (3)

Generally (comments not directly about or given only once for a particular outcome)

- 1) word choice/language is too broad, too specific, or too vague (10)
- 2) ordering of objectives within outcome needs to be re-worked or logically sequenced (7)
- 3) concern about the measurability of the outcomes/objectives (5)
- 4) students will not understand the objectives (2)

Appendix B: Summary of Feedback on Outcomes from Nov. 21, 2008 Event

SUMMARY OF FEEDBACK ON OUTCOMES FROM NOV. 23, 2008 CCTL EVENT

(Compiled by Dr. Jeffrey Jablonski, Assistant Director of General Education)

Below is a summary of the recorded suggestions on the proposed outcomes from the November 21, 2008 CCTL event. The comments were not transcribed verbatim, but an attempted was made to summarize the most common ones, quoting comments in some cases. The positive comments were not summarized here, but there were many of those.

Overall, the main suggestions for each category were as follows:

- 1) **Breadth:** called for an expansion of "integration" or "transference," more emphasis on research, and more clearly defined life-long learning objectives
- 2) **Critical thinking:** some wanted more emphasis on "logic/science method," others wanted additional emphasis on non-rational thought
- 3) **Communication:** define "general academic literacy" and add "teamwork" and "leadership" to collaboration objective
- 4) **Global/multicultural:** a lot of vague, hard to assess language; too much emphasis on "morals" and "values"
- 5) **Ethics and citizenship:** heavy on citizenship, light on ethics. "Civic imagination" vague, unclear

Breadth and Life-Long Learning

- For outcome definition, "understand and be able to use ... differing perspectives..."
 - "integrate"? Into what? Skills, transferable?
 - "understand and be able to use..."
 - "to be able to use diff. perspectives to solve problems, knowing when and how"
- "social sciences" do more than "analyze behavior"
 - Social science is more than behavior; doesn't do justice to the discipline
 - "social justice" is a value, not everyone shares it
- Is natural sciences same as physical sciences?
- "Expand possibilities for a minor within degree program in areas that impact students life-long social & intellectual development"
- Intellectual breadth should include the demonstration of foundational knowledge in these areas, natural science, social science, humanities and fine arts
- Include understanding of the information age/digital world
- From the perspective of a person of color one would have to have their culture and experiences included in this outcome/objectives. Infusing cultural competencies/diverse perspectives into curriculum would be key part of this outcome.
- Missing is health/human sciences; "in-depth knowledge" has to be able to "translate to real world and other disciplines"
- Model research, emphasis needed for graduate education; application of those skills to real world
 - Emphasize approach to research

- I'd suggesting adding something that specifically addresses UG participation in research and/or creative activity
- Independent learning for life-long learning, desire to continue learning
- #s 2-4 is old thinking. Multi-modal research should be promoted rather than existing business (sic?)
 - Rather than separating 2-4... "be able to use 2-4 in any situation..." (sic)
 - @2-4 too much. Why not simply recognize the different methods and models.
- "in depth knowledge" in not breadth, seems the antithesis
- Combine #1 & #5; add personal accountability to #6
- #5 how about "integrated" or "interdisciplinary"
- "personally meaningful context" is confusing, broad
- Interdisciplinary/transdisciplinary, focus upon problems/questions and flexibility of needed in problem solving
- Cluster #2 & #3 common methods and models
- Need to better incorporate idea of transference of knowledge from one class to another, from one discipline to another, compare methods across disciplines
- Should be described in assessable terms, rather than "develop" use "demonstrate"
- "methods and models of humanities and fine arts" needs clarification
- "in-depth knowledge" a bit nebulous, what would this look like
- #2 "use scientific methods and models"
- #2 define, solve, and evaluate problems: order seems backwards
- #5 delete "from general and specialized" what else is there? It confused me.
- The goal is critical to developing and demonstrating attainment in higher education. I think we would be well served by trying to provide enough clarity to identify meaningful and measurable outcomes as indicators of achievement.
- #5, reword to "identify the fundamental principles that are universal across disciplines"
- #5, #6 are so vague as to be meaningless, neither can be assessed. Either eliminate or make more specific.
- 2-4 word "models" means mathematical models?
- #6, where is the life-long learning. "life-long learning" vague, not defined
- This entire outcome is troubling to me – this seems to be an attempt to include specifics in a general core.
- #6 "recognition of the need for continual improvement. Adaptable."
- Life-long learning seems to stick out here, only included directly in #6. Life-long learning seems more of an attitude than an objective.

Inquiry and Critical Thinking

- "identify" not "analyze" for #1
- Add "creative reasoning" to "quantitative and qualitative"
- Pretty vaporous – an essential element of #2 is understanding and appreciation of the scientific method, logic, and math reasoning. I don't know how any serious study could not include problem solving formulations esp. the concept of "algorithm"
- Students need to know how to "evaluate" sources
- Move #4 (recognize complexity) to 1st position
- #3 add use of evidence to support a knowledge claim (or reword #5)

- “tolerate ambiguity” confusing
- Science has become a key part of society; it needs to be more explicitly addressed in the learning outcomes. Should specifically mention the scientific method in #1 or #3
- #2 replace “needed” with critical and “appropriate with “valid and reliable”
- This outcome seems to be based on modified research process. We need to envision how we will access critical thinking.
- #4 and #5 not listed in main definition.
- Both rational vs non rational, creative – emotional intelligence, sensing, intuition and social impacts of actions need to be added for full student development
 - Emotional intelligence is missing. What is missing is ways that aren’t rationalistic. Religious, mystical: only analytical thinking?
- #2 & #3 can be combined
- Objective 4 is too limited/difficult to achieve
- #5 will be difficult to assess

Communication

- “general academic literacy” vague, needs definition
 - Identified as a weakness multiple times
 - Unclear, jargon
 - Define
- “communicate effectively ... IN ENGLISH!
- Why focus on “discipline-specific” communication?
 - #2 “use genres and conventions” sounds too technical/academic
 - “genres” seems vague
 - “use genres” not assessable, add “effectively use”
 - Are students going to recognize “genres” and “conventions”?
- “deliver oral presentations” concern about deaf students. Delete “oral” or use “oral or equivalent”? Same for “produce effective visuals” for the blind...
 - “prepare and deliver effective presentations using a variety of media”
- “effectively disseminate information relevant to a discipline to a variety of audiences using a variety of methods/techniques ; delete oral
- Merge 3 & 5
 - Combine 3 & 5 [JJ: but 5 deals with print visuals, not just presentations...]
- I would like to see our lit requirement changes to allow more classes than just ENG 231-232 and possibly even other colleges/departments if appropriate courses available
- This misses two of the most important skills: how to function in teams and how to communicate with the public/customer/stakeholder; distinguish between electronic and digital, they’re not the same
- Mention audience, rhetorical stance, persuasion
- Use communication as a generative tool for higher level thinking
 - Add using writing as a generative tool. Concept presented by another group.
 - Missing: using tools of communication (e.g., writing, visual presentations) to develop your own understanding, logic, etc. and to generate new ideas (creativity)
- Add “to foster leadership, team building and leadership” to #4 collaborate effectively
 - Leadership, teambuilding

- #4 use “and” instead of “or”
- Missing: ability to identify and critically analyze the communication that you receive in terms of motivation, as a tool for individual and collaborative thinking, judgment, decision making
- #5 replace “different” with “a variety of”

Global/Multicultural

- Display “curiosity” hard to assess, just have “language or experience”?
 - Do international students satisfy “experience living” objective “simply by being here?”
 - “curiosity” is the wrong word, perhaps fluency or some other word
 - Can anyone mandate curiosity?
 - “curiosity” and “familiarity” is not the same
 - “curiosity” is a value, can you teach someone to be curious?
- What does “experience or interpret social justice” mean?
 - “experience” an awful word to use: how does one “experience” a concept?
 - Outside of #1 not sure it is the university’s job to teach this, there is a danger of indoctrinating students in these concepts, very uncomfortable with “teaching social justice”
 - Should “social justice” be part of citizenship and ethics? One hopes students will arrive at a concept of social justice for themselves without indoctrinating them (and potentially generating resistance to social justice)...
 - “experience” and “interpret” are two different things
 - Why is it “experience or interpret” [JJ: because study abroad requirement not feasible]
- This should be in addition to Eurocentric studies – the foundation of western civilization that should not be displaced from curriculum
- Don’t know what “demonstrate awareness of one’s own place in and effect on the world” means
 - Too broad
- ##2 “experience or interpret diverse perspectives” ... this wording troubles me. It implies that identity necessarily informs one’s perspective, resulting in group perspective, e.g., “the black experience,” or “the gay experience.”
- #1 – all world cultures?
- Add “ability” to #2. Jane Nichols informed a NSHE task force to include disability in coursework
- #1 and #2 seem easiest to implement and most appropriate for a university mission. 3-6 seem to be beyond the scope of classroom activity, they are byproducts of 1-2 that don’t need to be laid out and assessed.
 - #1, what about literature? And don’t need geography—that will come naturally w/ history
 - #2, don’t list “race, gender, ethnicity” – could also include class, religion, etc. Just leave more open, less prescriptive.
 - #3, “experience or interpret” quite vague. I think this outcome best left unstated. We can teach our students about world cultures but can’t force them to be good people.

- #4, curiosity” again has moralistic dimensions, what about just “exposure”?
- #5, our students are diverse already. We are not here to monitor their behavior.
- #6 okay
- #1 add politics and economies

Ethics and Citizenship

- “exercise civic imagination” hard to assess
 - “civic imagination” unclear
 - How do you assess “engage and exercise”?
- Acquire more than knowledge
- How is sustainability included in environmental, society?
- I can’t imagine how a well rounded education could ignore the legal systems of the community, which is fundamental to social justice
- #4 is very specific, why. It implies a democratic process
- Heavy on citizenship, light on ethics. Add ethics to #2, #3. The order of objectives seems to correspond to years at UNLV. That is, #1 is appropriate for freshman, #5 appropriate for seniors.
- Ethics objective(s) seem less well defined.
- #2 “human rights” in larger community
- Please, do not use “ethical reasoning,” instead rephrase “learn and apply reasoning so as to be able to decide on ethical actions in defined situations.” Ethics implies a moral judgment, reasoning determines a moral perspective.
- #4, “letter writing” not relevant in today’s world, should focus on e-mail, etc. may be a different set of skills.
- One of the biggest weaknesses of my students is the lack of diligence. Is it possible to create a learning outcome that encompasses that skill?

Overall

- Bullet rather than number points to avoid assumption of order of importance. If use #s, give them a priority of order.
- “I am concerned if the objectives/outcomes are too “soft.” Think more knowledge and measurable behaviors should be included.
- Why isn’t there an objective dealing with “healthy lifestyles” – the physical development is as important as the intellectual – the goal should be a healthy mind in a healthy body
 - Add a health component
- Where’s the connection to the UNLV/Las Vegas community?
- Add a 6th outcome, quantitative qualitative methods, analysis, reasoning
- Some of these outcomes/objectives are more suitable for the major, not general education, e.g., 1.1, 3.2
- Although this is getting ahead of where we are in the process, UNLV must develop some quality control procedures to ensure that students are getting quality, comparable experiences in these courses regardless of the instructor encountered. This means that these courses must be designed very carefully to achieve the objectives and then deliberate monitoring processes must exist to ensure consistency. Otherwise, this design process is moot.