

Definitions of outcomes from NMSU General Education Taskforce

Action: Process of doing something, typically to achieve an aim; a thing done; an act. (*Oxford Dictionaries*, http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/us/definition/american_english/action)

Collaboration: The act of working with someone to produce or create something. (*Oxford Dictionaries*, http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/us/definition/american_english/collaboration)

Collaborative Skills—The ability to work effectively in teams.

Communication – the ability to convey information, thoughts, and ideas in a meaningful and comprehensible manner using written, verbal, and other skills.

Communication skills—The ability to communicate effectively in written communication both formally (i.e. essays and papers) and informally (e-mails, discussion boards, etc.) and in oral communication formally (i.e. oral presentations) and informally (discussions, arguments and small group interactions).

Communication: Use of words, sounds, symbols, or behaviors to exchange information, concepts, thoughts, or emotions. Communication skills include the ability to listen, speak, read, and write.

Critical thinking – the practice of verifying, analyzing, and integrating, in a fair-minded and intellectually honest manner, data and information from multiple sources, observations, and experiences on any subject to reach reasoned conclusions and develop actions (adapted from <http://www.criticalthinking.org/pages/defining-critical-thinking/766>).

Critical thinking: Disciplined, reflective reasoning that is focused on deciding what to believe and how to act.

Culture: The arts, beliefs, customs, institutions, and other products of human work and thought considered as a unit, especially with regard to a particular time or social group. (*American Heritage® Dictionary of the English Language*, Fifth Edition, <http://www.thefreedictionary.com/culture>)

Discipline-based knowledge: Information, understanding, skills, and methods peculiar to a field or course of study.

Diversity: The condition of having or including people from different ethnicities and social backgrounds. (*American Heritage® Dictionary of the English Language*, Fifth Edition; <http://www.thefreedictionary.com/diversity>)

Engagement: Attention or commitment to, or involvement in, some cause or action.

Ethical literacy – the understanding of ethical principles and behavior in the discovery, anticipation, encounter, construction, and creation of workable solutions for problems in daily life (adapted from Ezra Bowen as cited in Barbara L. Nicholson, “E-Portfolios for

Educational Leaders: An ISSLC-Based Framework for Self-Assessment,” p.105, R&L Education Publishers, 2004).

Ethical Reasoning and Cultural Awareness—The ability to understand diverse cultures and societies and engage in diverse perspectives across time and space in an ethically conscious way.

Ethics: Standards of behavior accepted by a particular individual, group, or profession; also, the study of such standards.

Information Literacy—The ability to find and evaluate information using a variety of tools including the latest in technology.

Information Literacy: [T]he ability to know when there is a need for information, to be able to identify, locate, evaluate, and effectively use that information for the issue or problem at hand (National Forum on Information Literacy, <http://infolit.org/about-the-nfil/what-is-the-nfil/>).

Innovation: The design of useful new works, devices, processes, methods, products, or systems.

Interdisciplinary Skills—The ability to combine ideas from two or more disparate fields in order to define, address or interpret problems of broader relevance.

Investigation: Use of qualitative and quantitative research methods to acquire information and gain understanding. This may include review of existing literature, the design of experiments and surveys, application of probability and measurement theory, and the statistical treatment of data and observations.

Life-long self-learner—The ability to gain knowledge to expand and move into new contexts, connect the information between diverse fields to solve real world problems, and think broadly in an integrative way across disciplines.

Lifelong learning: The “ongoing, voluntary, and self-motivated” pursuit of knowledge for either personal or professional reasons. (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lifelong_learning; see also http://www.llcq.org.au/01_cms/details.asp?ID=12)

Logical Reasoning—The ability to identify the premise, evaluate the quality of information and develop an argument.

Modeling: Application of mathematics, and the natural and social sciences to create useful representations of natural and artificial systems.

Multi-cultural literacy – the knowledge of history, contributions, and perspectives of different cultural groups, including one’s own group, necessary for communication, acceptance, and understanding in an ever changing global society (adapted from Desmond, 2011, as given in <http://culturalliteracytutorial.blogspot.com/2013/02/cultural-literacy-definition.html>).

Numerical literacy – the ability to use and understand mathematics and statistics in daily life and to be able to recognize sound quantitative reasoning.

Problem Solving: Mental processes and methods for the discovery, definition, analysis, and resolution of difficulties or challenges.

Professionalism: Service to employers, clients, and the general public according to high technical and ethical standards.

Qualitative analysis/research: Treatment of information that cannot easily be expressed in terms of numbers or quantities. Such information might be obtained by observations, interviews, focus groups, surveys, and so forth.

Qualitative reasoning: In Artificial Intelligence, the means of expressing “conceptual knowledge such as the physical system structure, causality, the start and end of processes, the assumptions and conditions under which facts are true, qualitative distinct behaviours, etc.” (Bredeweg, et al., 2009). More generally, qualitative reasoning involves thinking about things that cannot be expressed in terms of quantities.

Qualitative skills: Abilities and techniques for dealing with qualities.

Qualitative: Concerned with *quality*, that is, the inherent features, essential character, properties, or nature of something. In general, qualities may be observed but usually not measured directly. Often contrasted with *quantitative*.

Quantitative analysis/research: Treatment of data expressed in terms of numbers or quantities.

Quantitative reasoning: Ability to analyze quantitative information, including the determination of which skills and procedures can be applied to a particular problem to arrive at a solution. (<http://www.ets.org/Media/Research/pdf/RR-03-30-Dwyer.pdf>)

Quantitative skills: Abilities and techniques for dealing with quantities.

Quantitative Skills/Numeracy—The ability to organize, interpret, evaluate and present quantitative information.

Quantitative: Concerned with *quantity*, that is, amount, size, measurement, or number. Often contrasted with *qualitative*.

Scientific literacy – the knowledge and understanding of scientific concepts and processes required for personal decision making, participation in civic and cultural affairs, and economic productivity (from <http://www.literacynet.org/science/scientificliteracy.html>).

Social Responsibility: The idea that individuals, groups, and organizations have an obligation to behave in ways that benefit society at large.

Sustainability: The quality of not being harmful to the environment or depleting natural resources, and thereby supporting long-term ecological balance. (*Random House*

Dictionary, <http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/sustainability>)

Synthesis: The combining of separate elements or substances to form a coherent whole; the complex whole so formed. (*American Heritage® Dictionary of the English Language*, Fifth Edition, <http://www.thefreedictionary.com/synthesis>)

Values: Important and lasting beliefs or ideals shared by members of a culture about what is good or bad and desirable or undesirable. (*The Business Dictionary*, <http://www.businessdictionary.com/definition/values.html#ixzz3tmC1Nvmh>)