

Desired skills and knowledge that a General Education Program should provide
(Group 4)

Skills:

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

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>).

Knowledge:

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

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>).

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>).

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).

Comparison with other institution's desired skills and knowledge that a General Education Program should provide
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Summary

	Discipline	Critical Thinking	Info literacy	Communication	Ethics/Social Responsibility	Cultures/Diversity	Collaboration	Qualitative/Quantitative Skills	Lifelong learning	Sustainability	Values	Solve problems/ Synthesis	Action/Engagement
1 Augsburg		x		x		x		x		x	x	x	x
2 Cornell	x		x	x	x	x	x	x		x			
3 Harvard		x			x	x		x					x
4 Notre Dame	x	x	x	x	x	x					x		x
5 Portland	x	x	x	x	x	x				x		x	x
6 Stanford		x			x	x							
7 TAMU	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x			x	x
8. Minnesota	x	x	x	x		x			x			x	
9 UNLV	x	x	x	x	x	x		x	x				
10 Seattle U	x	x		x	x		x				x		x
NMSU-group 4 thought		X		X	X	X		X1				X	

1 Statistics

Thoughts, observations, and discussion topics about General Education in general and at NMSU (from Group 4 with thanks to William Walker for putting this together):

Our menu system is an ancient model in American academia that has been around since at least 1906. I want something that forces students to have a cohort experience and some meat at the upper end.

Our gen eds are over weighted at the 100 level and do not serve as liberal arts choices but instead as means for making up for high school deficiencies. Such course should be left to the community colleges or high schools.

In many (not all) departments, Gen Ed courses are taught by graduate students, adjuncts and college faculty rather than the most experienced teachers and/or researchers. That also fosters a separate but equal distinction between majors and general ed courses.

In addition to two VWW courses a few more upper division would be nice even if we sacrificed some lower division ones

Although we did not discuss it every department should have its own writing class. Depending on the Gen English courses has not been effective.