

HawCC General Education Learning Outcomes and Benchmarks

Procedures to amend General Education Learning Outcome Descriptors will be developed by the General Education Committee and confirmed by the Academic Senate.

There are 10 General Education Learning Outcomes (GELOs) and within each, a set of benchmarks identified by letters. Benchmarks were developed by the Academic Senate's ad hoc General Education Committee and were based on what was found in a survey of the literature for standards used by professional organizations and associations to describe competence in specific fields. Such organizations include but are not limited to: Association of American Colleges and Universities, National Council of Teachers of Mathematics, Association for College and Research Libraries, etc.

1. Communication - Speak and write to communicate information and ideas in professional, academic and personal settings.

Speech
Benchmarks indicate a student is able to:
a. identify and analyze the audience and purpose of any intended communication;
b. use effective oral expression to initiate and sustain discussions, ask questions and obtain information;
c. research, organize, outline, and present informative and persuasive speeches;
d. apply skills of effective listening;
e. develop a main idea clearly and concisely with appropriate content.
Writing
Benchmarks indicate a student is able to:
a. understand and employ the writing process, including pre-writing, drafting, revising, and editing;
b. develop a main idea clearly and concisely with appropriate content;
c. write an essay with a clear thesis and purpose, in a form appropriate to academic writing;
d. demonstrate mastery of the conventions of writing, including grammar, spelling, and mechanics.

2. Critical Reading - Read critically to synthesize information to gain understanding.

Benchmarks indicate a student is able to:
a. identify a writer's purpose, main idea, organizational patterns, tone, audience, bias and point of view;
b. analyze, organize, evaluate, and synthesize ideas from textbooks, periodicals, literature, and electronic sources;
c. use appropriate reading techniques depending on the material and purpose.

3. Critical Thinking - Make informed decisions through analyzing and evaluating information.

Benchmarks indicate a student is able to:
a. identify and analyze assumptions and underlying points of view relating to an issue or problem;
b. formulate research questions that require descriptive and explanatory analyses;
c. recognize and understand multiple modes of inquiry, including investigative methods based on observation and analysis;
d. evaluate a problem, distinguishing between relevant and irrelevant facts, opinions, assumptions, issues, values, and biases through the use of appropriate evidence;
e. apply problem-solving techniques and skills, including the rules of logic and logical sequence;
f. synthesize information from various sources, drawing appropriate conclusions;
g. reflect upon and evaluate his/her thought processes, value systems, and worldviews in comparison to those of others;
h. demonstrate the ability to combine elements that lead to new expressions and create new products.

4. Information Competency – Retrieve, evaluate, and utilize information.

Benchmarks indicate a student is able to:
a. define and articulate his/her information need;
b. retrieve and evaluate information from a variety of sources;
c. synthesize information from a variety of sources;
d. use information ethically, cite it appropriately, and understand what plagiarism is.

5. Technological Literacy -- Employ computer technology to perform academic and professional tasks.

Benchmarks indicate a student is able to:
a. demonstrate proficiency in using applications such as those used for word processing, spreadsheets and presentations;
b. apply knowledge of security, ethical, and legal standards while using technology;
c. use electronic technology tools such as e-mail, discussion boards, video-conferencing and social networking sites appropriately and with proper etiquette;
d. use basic terminology associated with technology.

6. Quantitative Reasoning -- Apply mathematical concepts, methods, and problem-solving strategies to analyze, synthesize, and evaluate real-world problems in quantitative terms.

Benchmarks indicate a student is able to:
a. apply appropriate modeling strategies, which include algebraic, statistical, estimation, inductive and/or deductive reasoning techniques to solve real-world problems arithmetically;
b. interpret mathematical models such as formulas, graphs, tables, and schematics, and draw inferences from them;
c. represent mathematical information symbolically, visually, numerically, and verbally to express abstractions and manipulate symbols within a logical system;
d. estimate and check answers to mathematical problems in order to determine reasonableness, identify alternatives, and select optimal results.

7. Areas of Knowledge -- Utilize methods, perspectives and content of selected disciplines in the natural sciences, social sciences, and humanities.

Natural Sciences
Benchmarks indicates a student is able to:
a. use the basic terminology of theories, structures or processes of <i>the natural sciences</i>
b. demonstrate an understanding of the theories of the <i>natural sciences</i> , specifically in the physical or biological sciences
c. use the <i>scientific method</i> -- including observation, experimentation and scientific reasoning
Social Sciences
Benchmarks indicate a student is able to:
a. use the basic terminology of theories, structures or processes in the social sciences;
b. demonstrate an application of social science theories, principles or concepts to understanding one's self, family or community;
c. systematically study human behavior using research methods of the social sciences.
Humanities
Benchmarks indicate a student is able to:
a. use the basic terminology of the humanities, which encompass the following disciplines: history, philosophy, language, religion and the arts, including visual, performing or creative;
b. demonstrate an understanding of the theories of the humanities;
c. apply methods or modes of inquiry used in the study of the humanities.

8. Self and Community - Engage in activities demonstrating understanding of one's relationship with one's communities and environments.

Benchmarks indicate students are able to:
a. communicate an understanding of community or environmental issues;
b. participate in activities of personal and public concern that are both life enriching and beneficial to the community;
d. analyze what she/he has learned as it relates to a clarified sense of civic identity and continued commitment to public action.

9. Cultural Diversity --Articulate and demonstrate an awareness and sensitivity to cultural diversity.

Benchmarks indicate a student is able to:
a. explain insights about his/her own cultural rules and biases and suspend judgment in valuing his/her interactions with different cultures;
b. demonstrate understanding of the elements important to members of another culture in relation to its history, values, politics, communication styles, economy, or beliefs and practices;
c. express an understanding of cultural similarities and differences.

10. Ethics -- Articulate and demonstrate knowledge of ethical behavior and the process of ethical decision-making

Benchmarks indicate a student is able to:
a. demonstrate an understanding of ethical principles from a disciplinary point of view.
b. reflect on, analyze and evaluate ethical dilemmas.
c. state the implications of choosing various principles of action.

Academic Senate history of General Education Learning Outcomes and Benchmarks (formerly Descriptors)

- First Reading—April 29, 2011
- Second Reading—May 6, 2011
- Action—September 23, 2011; approved as amended, September 23, 2011: Procedures to amend
- General Education Learning Outcome Descriptors will be developed by the General Education Committee and confirmed by the Academic Senate
- Communication descriptors revised by Academic Senate, Jan. 27, 2012 and further amended by the Academic Senate, Feb. 17, 2012
- housekeeping edits to selected descriptors, March 2, 2012
- Revisions unanimously approved by the HawCC Academic Senate, September 27, 2013
- Revisions to General Education Learning Outcome 10, Ethics, and its Benchmark a. were proposed by the Liberal Arts DCs, unanimously endorsed by the ad hoc GE Committee and unanimously approved by the Academic Senate, May 9, 2014.