

Student Learning Outcomes

Proposal

From the UMM Curriculum Committee

(Approved by the Curriculum Committee May 6, 2009)

The Curriculum Committee has examined the Student Learning Outcomes currently adopted by the Twin Cities campus. They are as follows:

At the time of receiving a bachelor's degree, it is the University's goal that its students:

- 1. Can identify, define, and solve problems.*
- 2. Can locate and critically evaluate information.*
- 3. Have mastered a body of knowledge and a mode of inquiry.*
- 4. Understand diverse philosophies and cultures within and across societies.*
- 5. Can communicate effectively.*
- 6. Understand the role of creativity, innovation, discovery, and expression across disciplines.*
- 7. Have acquired skills for effective citizenship and life-long learning.*

The Committee feels that these outcomes are not sufficient or reflective of our campus as a liberal arts college, its unique educational mission within the University of Minnesota and our newly-adopted mission statement.

The Committee reviewed the work of the Learning Outcomes subcommittee from AY07-08 and examined other student learning outcomes proposed by national organizations promoting liberal education. Based on the committee's review, we propose the following student learning outcomes that are adapted from the Liberal Education and America's Promise (LEAP) program of the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U).¹ LEAP is "an initiative that champions the value of a liberal education—for individual students and for a nation dependent on economic creativity and democratic vitality. The initiative focuses campus practices on fostering essential learning outcomes for all students, whatever their chosen field of study." It is this expressed statement regarding liberal education, the combination of curricular and co-curricular learning, and the direct linkages of these outcomes with those discussed on our campus previously that leads the Curriculum Committee to propose the following UMM Student Learning Outcomes.

¹ The LEAP learning outcomes were developed by the National Leadership Council for LEAP, comprised of 33 members including current or former college presidents from Harvard, University of Michigan, Wheaton College, University of Maryland Baltimore County, University of Massachusetts System, and Spelman College, plus presidents of Common Cause, Carnegie Foundation, Council on Higher Education Accreditation, Rockefeller Foundation, College Board, and Public Agenda. The full council membership can be found on the third page of the LEAP report found at http://www.aacu.org/leap/documents/GlobalCentury_final.pdf

University of Minnesota, Morris Student Learning Outcomes (adapted from the LEAP Learning Outcomes²):

Graduates of UMM should prepare for 21st century challenges by gaining:

1. Knowledge of Human Cultures and the Physical and Natural World

- Through in-depth study in a particular field (e.g., its schools of thought, advanced theories, language, and methods of inquiry)
- Through study in the sciences and mathematics, social sciences, humanities, histories, languages, and the arts

Focused by engagement with big questions, both contemporary and enduring

2. Intellectual and Practical Skills, including

- Inquiry and analysis
- Critical and creative thinking
- Written and oral communication
- Quantitative literacy
- Information and technology literacy
- Teamwork and problem solving

Practiced extensively, across the curriculum, in the context of progressively more challenging problems, projects, and standards for performance

3. An Understanding of the role of the individual in society, including

- Civic knowledge and engagement—local and global
- Intercultural knowledge and competence
- Environmental stewardship
- Ethical reasoning and action
- Foundations and skills for sustained learning throughout their lives

Anchored through active involvement with diverse communities and real-world challenges

4. Integrative Learning, including

- Synthesis and advanced accomplishment across general and specialized studies

Demonstrated through the application of knowledge, skills, and responsibilities to new settings and complex problems

² Association of American Colleges and Universities, 2007. *College Learning for the New Global Century*. Washington, D.C., 62 pp.