

WENTWORTH COLLEGE
EDUCATIONAL OBJECTIVES, GOALS AND COMPETENCIES
August 2009

RATIONALE FOR GENERAL EDUCATION

Graduates from Wentworth College will acquire and use the intellectual tools, knowledge and creative capabilities necessary to study the world as it is, as is it understood, and as it might be imagined. The curriculum will furnish the students with skills that enable them to deepen that understanding and to communicate with others. Through Wentworth courses, the college equips students for success in their areas of study and for fulfilled lives as educated persons, as active citizens, and as effective contributors to their own prosperity and to the general welfare.

Academic knowledge will alert students to connections between traditional disciplines and to the potential for interaction among all branches of knowing, ordering, and imagining the real world. As the real world is diverse, Wentworth education shall inform students that the world is understood in different ways and will provide them with the means to come to terms, intelligently and humanely, with that diversity. As diversities of knowing and understanding will be made open and accessible, so students will acquire appropriate investigative, interpretative and communicative competencies.

All Wentworth grads will be expected to have competencies and skills, to be critical thinkers, problem solvers and have the knowledge to be a productive contributor to society, and assume the responsibilities to act as partners in learning with the institution.

Consistent with its mission, Wentworth College shall offer a general education program that is designated to enable students to achieve the following general education goals

GENERAL EDUCATION GOALS AND COMPETENCIES

The following two terms describe the aims of general education in the state of Missouri and are adhered to by Wentworth. Goals refer to the curricular intent of state policy regarding the academic skills and knowledge content of general education.

Competencies denote illustrative state-level expectations for student performance in general education. Faculty at Wentworth College have designed an education program that fits our mission and meets state-level curricular goals. The general education program will specify Wentworth student competencies that will follow from achieving these curricular goals and which are in alignment with the suggested competencies listed in the following sections. These general education aims and outcomes may be achieved in various ways, including through traditional courses, through interdisciplinary teaching, or through competencies embedded across the curriculum. State-level curricular goals and Wentworth College student competencies for education fall into two categories: academic skills and knowledge.

SKILLS AREAS

1. Communicating

State-Level Goal: To develop students' effective use of the English language and Quantitative and other symbolic systems essential to their success in school and in the world. Students should be able to read and listen critically and to write and speak with thoughtfulness, clarity, coherence and persuasiveness.

Suggested Competencies: Students will demonstrate the ability to...

- 1.1 Analyze and evaluate their own and others' speaking and writing, conceive of writing as a recursive process that involves many strategies, including generating material, evaluating sources when used, drafting, revising and editing.
- 1.2 Make formal written and oral presentations employing correct diction, syntax, usage, grammar and mechanics.
- 1.3 Focus on a purpose (e.g., explaining, problem solving, argument) and vary approaches to writing and speaking based on that purpose.
- 1.4 Respond to the needs of different venues and audiences and choose words for appropriateness and effect.
- 1.5 Communicate effectively in groups by listening, reflecting and responding appropriately and in context.
- 1.6 Use mathematical and statistical models, standard quantitative symbols and various graphical tactics to present information with clarity, accuracy precision.

2. Higher-Order Thinking

State-Level Goal: To develop students' ability to distinguish among opinions, facts and inferences; to identify underlying or implicit assumptions; to make informed judgments; and to solve problems by applying evaluative standards.

Suggested Competencies: Students will demonstrate the ability to...

- 2.1 Recognize the problematic elements of presentations of information and argument and to formulate diagnostic questions for resolving issues and solving problems.
- 2.2 Use linguistic, mathematical or other symbolic approaches to describe problems, identify alternative solutions and make reasoned choices among those problems.
- 2.3 Analyze and synthesize information from a variety of sources and apply the results to resolving complex situations and problems.
- 2.4 Defend conclusions using relevant evidence and reasoned argument.
- 2.5 Reflect on and evaluate their critical-thinking processes.

3. Managing Information

State-Level Goal: To develop students' abilities to locate, organize, store, retrieve, evaluate, synthesize, and annotate information from print, electronic, and other sources in preparation for solving problems and making informed decisions.

Suggested Competencies: Students will demonstrate the ability to.....

- 3.1 Access and/or generate information from a variety of sources, including the most contemporary technological information services.
- 3.2 Evaluate information for its currency, usefulness, truthfulness and accuracy.
- 3.3 Organize, store and retrieve information efficiently.
- 3.4 Reorganize information for an intended purpose, such as research projects.
- 3.5 Present information clearly and concisely, using traditional and contemporary technologies.

4. Valuing

State-Level Goal: To develop students' abilities to understand the moral and ethical values of a diverse society and to understand that many courses of action are guided by value judgments about the way things ought to be. Students should be able to make informed decisions through identifying personal values and the values of others and through understanding how such values develop. They should be able to analyze the ethical implications of choices made on the basis of these values.

Suggested Competencies: Students will demonstrate the ability to...

- 4.1 Compare and contrast historical and cultural ethical perspectives and belief systems.
- 4.2 Utilize cultural, behavioral and historical knowledge to clarify and articulate a personal value system.
- 4.3 Recognize the ramifications of one's value decisions on self and others.
- 4.4 Recognize conflicts within and between value systems and recognize and analyze ethical issues as they arise in a variety of contexts.
- 4.5 Consider multiple perspectives, recognize biases, and deal with ambiguity, and take a reasonable position.

KNOWLEDGE AREAS

5. Social and Behavioral Sciences

State-Level Goal: to develop students' understanding of themselves and the world around them through study of content and the processes used by historians and social and behavioral scientists to discover, describe, explain, and predict human behavior and

social systems. Students must understand the diversities and complexities of the cultural and social world, past and present, and come to an informed sense of self and others. (Students must fulfill the state statute requirements for the United States and Missouri constitutions.)

Suggested Competencies: Students will demonstrate the ability to...

- 5.1 Explain social institutions, structures, and processes across a range of historical periods and cultures.
- 5.2 Develop and communicate hypothetical explanations for individual human behavior within the large-scale historical and social context.
- 5.3 Draw on history and the social sciences to evaluate contemporary problems.
- 5.4 Describe and analytically compare social, cultural, and historical settings and processes other than one's own.
- 5.5 Articulate the interconnectedness of people and places around the globe.
- 5.6 Describe and explain the constitutions of the United States and Missouri.

6. Humanities and Fine Arts

State-Level Goal: To develop students' understanding of the ways in which humans have addressed their condition through imaginative work in the humanities and fine arts; to deepen their understanding of how that imaginative process is informed and limited by social, cultural, linguistic, and historical circumstances; and to appreciate the world of the creative imagination as a form of knowledge.

Suggested competencies: Students will demonstrate the ability to...

- 6.1 Describe the scope and variety of works in the humanities and fine arts (e.g., fine and performing arts, literature, speculative thought).
- 6.2 Explain the historical, cultural and social context of the humanities and fine arts.
- 6.3 Identify the aesthetic standards used to make critical judgments in various artistic fields.
- 6.4 Develop a plausible understanding of the differences and relationships between formal and popular culture.
- 6.5 Articulate a response based upon aesthetic standards to observance of works in the humanities and fine arts.

7. Mathematics

State-Level Goal: To develop students' understanding of fundamental mathematical concepts and their applications. Students should develop a level of quantitative literacy

that would enable them to make decisions and solve problems and which could serve as a basis for continued learning. (The mathematics requirement for general education should have the same prerequisite(s) and level of rigor as college algebra.)

Suggested Competencies: Students will demonstrate the ability to...

7.1 Describe contributions to society from the discipline of mathematics.

7.2 Recognize and use connections within mathematics and between mathematics and other disciplines.

7.3 Read, interpret, analyze and synthesize quantitative data (e.g., graphs, tables, statistics, survey data) and make reasoned estimates.

7.4 Formulate and use generalizations based upon pattern recognition.

7.5 Apply and use mathematical models (e.g., algebraic, geometric, statistical) to solve problems

8. Life and Physical Sciences

State-Level Goal: To develop students' understanding of the principles and laboratory procedures of life and physical sciences and to cultivate their abilities to apply the empirical methods of scientific inquiry. Students should understand how scientific discovery changes theoretical views of the world, informs our imaginations, and shapes human history. Students should also understand that science is shaped by historical and social contexts.

Suggested Competencies: Students will demonstrate the ability to...

8.1 Explain how to use the scientific method and how to develop and test hypotheses in order to draw defensible conclusions.

8.2 Evaluate scientific evidence and argument.

8.3 Describe the basic principles of the physical universe.

8.4 Describe concepts of the nature, organization and evolution of living systems.

8.5 Explain how human choices affect the earth and living systems.