November 2006

MEMORANDUM

To: OUS Provosts
From: Karen Sprague
Subject: General Education Outcomes and Criteria Background Materials

I thought that the enclosed material might be useful for establishing a context for the current campus discussions of General Education Outcomes and Criteria statements. These documents were distributed to the faculty teams who assembled in February and April of 2006 to create initial drafts of the statements. I believe they were sent to you as well, but perhaps not in electronic form. The contents are:

- JBAC Cover letter introducing the work
- Description of the initiative
- Examples of outcomes statements
- Examples of course criteria

If you have questions about any of this material, please contact me (kus@uoregon.edu) or Jonathan Jacobs (jonathan_jacobs@ous.edu)
January 23, 2006

MEMORANDUM

To: General Education Workshop Participants
Student Success and Retention Conference

From: Ed Watson, Chair
Joint Boards Articulation Commission

Dear Workshop Participant:

On behalf of the Joint Boards Articulation Commission (JBAC), I want to welcome you to the 2006 Student Success and Retention Conference, a combination of two popular statewide conferences: the Student Success Conference and the Articulation and Transfer Conference. This year’s conference theme, “One System for Oregon Students” expresses JBAC’s primary purpose – to promote effective transfer and articulation for undergraduate students. Since its establishment in 1992 by the Board of Education and The Board of Higher Education, JBAC has encouraged collaboration among the postsecondary sectors to smooth transfer, particularly for Oregon community college students who transition to an Oregon University System campus. A principal focus of JBAC attention has been the General Education that is included in transferable Associate’s degrees, the AA/OT and the AS/OT-Business.

This year’s conference features a full-day workshop that will begin the development of an outcomes-based framework for transferable General Education courses. Under the leadership of JBAC, this initiative responds specifically to the directive for such a framework in Senate Bill 342, which became law last spring. This legislative prompt creates the potential for statewide faculty input into the General Education we offer to transfer students. The opportunity for direct communication among faculty from different institutions is new and powerful, and we anticipate significant results. The attached document, “Toward Improving General Education that is Transferable within Oregon”, is JBAC’s effort to explain the purpose and future direction of the initiative. The work will require clear thinking and collegiality, and that is why we have asked you to contribute.

I am grateful for your leadership in taking on this challenging task. The work may not be easy, but it is important and I expect that you will find it satisfying. If you have any concerns or questions regarding the work of JBAC, or the purpose of this meeting, please do not hesitate to contact me or a JBAC member. Enjoy the conference!
Toward Improving General Education that is Transferable within Oregon

A Common Understanding of the Purpose of General Education

The education of undergraduate students is an essential activity of all Oregon colleges and universities. While undergraduate education needs to provide discipline-specific knowledge and skills through concentrated work in an academic major, it must also help students develop the habits of mind that lead to thoughtful and productive global citizenship. All parts of a well-designed education encourage these habits, but an effective General Education curriculum has this as its explicit goal. To this end, it seeks to promote

- The capacity for analytical thinking and problem solving
- The ability to communicate effectively, including listening, observing, speaking, and writing
- An understanding of the natural world and the role of humans in it
- An appreciation of the arts and humanities and the richness of human experience and expression
- An awareness of multiple perspectives and the importance of diversity
- A sense of societal responsibility, community service and global citizenship
- The ability to develop a sense of direction, with the self-discipline needed for the ethical pursuit of a purposeful life

What is the problem?
Although colleges and universities in Oregon embrace the value of General Education, most have developed their own unique philosophies and curricula that support these ideals. These varied curricula are a valuable resource for Oregon students, and their individuality must be preserved. Unfortunately, the underlying mechanics that shape them are complicated sets of course and credit specifications. Although educators understand that these specifications do not represent the essence of General Education, the public

1 The essence of this purpose statement was formulated by the OUS Provosts Council, Fall 2004.
does not, and emphasis on the details often reduces this coursework to a mere check-list of requirements. Descriptions confined to credit hours, or other quantitative measures of General Education, fail to communicate the opportunities for delight and discovery represented by this rich curriculum. Additionally, for students transferring among community colleges and universities, lower division General Education coursework may have to be repeated, and credits "lost", because of incompatibilities among variant curricula. The frustration of students and taxpayers, when faced with seemingly arbitrary transferability decisions, is understandable.

**What can be done about it?**

As educators, we must take responsibility for improving matters. While General Education curricula depend on course and credit requirements to shape the intellectual experiences we desire for students, we know that a variety of structures can promote the qualities we’re after. Thinking through the genetic underpinnings of cancer promotes analytical thinking, but so does dissecting the religious and cultural influences in 7th century Spain.

The JBAC believes that the transferability of lower division General Education throughout the state could be improved through a collaboratively-developed framework that is based on commonly agreed-upon learning outcomes and course criteria. Not only would this model improve the transferability of coursework among community colleges and universities, it could strengthen the statewide commitment to General Education without compromising the uniqueness of individual institutions’ General Education curricula. Both faculty and students would benefit from such a framework. By adhering to general principles rather than a rigid template, faculty would have the freedom to design General Education courses that take advantage of their individual expertise and that reflect significant new insights. Students would benefit from faculty innovation in the classroom, while retaining assurance of the transferability of their coursework.

This is why you are invited to a meeting on February 9-10, 2006. You have been identified as an excellent faculty member with a record of commitment to General Education, and we invite you to work with ~10 other Oregon community college and university faculty in your disciplinary area to describe the General Education outcomes you desire for students when you teach in that area. These outcomes may resemble the ones for General Education as a whole, but they will likely include some ideas that are specific to your area. We would also like you to define the characteristics of courses that you think are effective in promoting those outcomes.
Because General Education is broad and varied, we have simplified the task at hand by focusing on the 6 General Education areas currently represented in the AA/OT and OTM:

- Writing
- Oral Communication
- Mathematics
- Arts and Letters
- Social Sciences
- Science/Math/Computer Science

We expect that your work will proceed in two stages:

**Stage 1 (Feb. 9-10): Identify the broad outcomes desired from coursework in your area.** These are the habits of mind, skills, or kinds of understanding that a successful student should acquire, and be able to apply, as a result of taking courses in your area.

**Stage 2: Identify general criteria that courses in your area should meet in order to promote the desired outcomes for students.** These are the characteristics of courses that, in your view, make them effective in promoting the outcomes identified in Stage 1. This work will happen over the following few months. We expect that your Stage 1 work on Feb. 9-10 will clarify how you wish to go about formulating course criteria. We encourage you and your group to rely on your own inclinations and good judgment. We will happily assist with logistics, but do not want to prescribe your approach.

**Expanding the Discussion:** After the initial work on February 9th, discussion of outcome-based General Education will be broadened to include all interested faculty members. Specifically, draft outcomes and criteria will be circulated for faculty consideration at all Oregon community colleges, public universities, and participating independent institutions. We expect that local campus discussions will generate suggestions for improvement, much as discussion of the OTM did during AY2004/05. JBAC will then be responsible for collecting these ideas and using them to refine the statements of outcomes and criteria.
Anticipated Results

Short-term: A clear statement of the intended learning outcomes of a General Education curriculum, regardless of its particular design, will help all of us communicate the key role of General Education – to students, parents, and Oregon citizens.

The definition of criteria for effective General Education courses will be immediately helpful to faculty as they improve existing General Education courses and design new ones.

Long-term: We anticipate that the criteria for effective General Education courses will form the basis of a new, faculty-led procedure for making thoughtful decisions about the inclusion of specific courses in widely transferable degrees or modules. At present, such decisions can appear arbitrary because they are made according to local campus guidelines that are not widely known. It would be preferable for faculty groups with broad membership (public universities, community colleges and participating private schools) to make these decisions based on congruence with generally agreed-upon criteria. In such a system, transferability would not depend primarily on identity of course numbering or content, but on more general characteristics that can be shared by courses on diverse topics. This approach may lead to more consistency and commonality in course content, design, and numbering, and it should facilitate review of the AA/OT. Moreover, a tradition of substantive curricular discussions among faculty from diverse institutions is likely to have benefits beyond heightened appreciation of General Education. Such groups, because of their disciplinary expertise and direct classroom experience, are in position to communicate the nature of college-level work in their areas, and improve the quality of the General Education experience for undergraduate students throughout Oregon.

We don’t have to start from scratch

The statements of General Education outcomes and criteria that we hope to develop through this process are not fundamentally different from the descriptions currently in use by many individual Oregon colleges and universities. In addition, states such as Colorado and Ohio have developed documents based upon this model. The packet you’ve received contains these examples. They’re not intended to limit your creativity, but they might be useful as illustrations.

You may also enjoy reading the enclosed chapter from Frank H.T. Rhodes’ book, *The Creation of the Future: The Role of the American University*. Part way through the chapter, Rhodes says:

> The greatest privilege a faculty member can have is to design and support a curriculum. All the riches of human experience are there. All the teeming problems and the noisy issues of our society are there. All our capacity and all our hopes for the well-being of our planet and our people rest there.
Examples of General Education Outcomes Statements and Course Criteria

We have gathered some examples of General Education outcomes statements and course criteria that are already in use at individual colleges and universities, in Oregon and elsewhere, or statewide in Colorado. We have collected only examples that correspond to the 6 General Education subdivisions within the AA/OT (Associate of Arts/Oregon Transfer) degree and OTM (Oregon Transfer Module), and have organized them according to those subdivisions:

Writing
Oral Communication
Mathematics
Arts and Letters
Social Science
Science

What do we mean by “outcomes” and “criteria”?

**Outcomes** statements are broad. They describe the habits of mind, skills, or kinds of insight that we want students to acquire, and be able to use, as a result of taking courses in a particular area.

**Criteria** identify the characteristics of courses that we think have the best chance of producing the desired outcomes for students.

This packet contains: Outcomes Statements
Writing

**Eastern Oregon University:** Be able to communicate effectively [through] … analytical reading and academic writing in the diverse situations encountered as educated citizens; be able to communicate effectively using appropriate symbolic technological systems.

**Lane Community College:** Demonstrate effective writing skills through principles of clear thinking; awareness of audience; appropriate conventions of format, structure, and language; and clear thesis development.

**Mt Hood Community College:** Write effectively for personal, academic and career purposes.

**Southern Oregon University:** Communicate effectively in various ways: written, oral, and visual
- Use verbal and nonverbal techniques and conventions in ways appropriate to purpose and audience.
- Demonstrate inferential and evaluative comprehension of texts including literature, speeches, scripts, artifacts, music, media, and works of art
- Interpret and communicate purpose and cultural assumptions of authors, speakers, and artists
- Demonstrate mastery of Standard American English

**Colorado State System:** The general education requirement in communication is designed to help students:
- To develop the ability to use the English language effectively.
- To read and listen critically.
- To write with thoughtfulness, clarity, coherence, and persuasiveness.

**The Oregon Writing and English Advisory Committee (OWEAC) has developed detailed recommendations for Composition Courses, which are included on pp 10-13 of this packet.**
Oral Communication

**Eastern Oregon University:** Be able to communicate effectively by means of active listening, public speaking, collaborating … in the diverse situations encountered as educated citizens; be able to adjust presentations according to subject, occasion, audience, and purpose.

**Lane Community College:** Demonstrate understanding and use of effective and respectful listening, interpersonal, small group/collaborative, and public communication skills among diverse populations.

**Linn Benton Community College:**
- Be able to recognize the value, application, and ethical responsibilities of the communication process.
- Construct clear messages.
- Interact with self confidence.
- Recognize the value and application of empathy.

**Mt Hood Community College:** Speak effectively for personal, academic and career purposes.

**Southern Oregon University:** Communicate effectively in various ways: written, oral, and visual
- Use verbal and nonverbal techniques and conventions in ways appropriate to purpose and audience.
- Demonstrate inferential and evaluative comprehension of texts including literature, speeches, scripts, artifacts, music, media, and works of art
- Interpret and communicate purpose and cultural assumptions of authors, speakers, and artists
- Demonstrate mastery of Standard American English

**Colorado State System:** The general education requirement in communication is designed to help students:
- To develop the ability to use the English language effectively.
- To read and listen critically.
- To write with thoughtfulness, clarity, coherence, and persuasiveness.
Mathematics

**Eastern Oregon University:** Be able to use mathematical abilities to solve problems and interpret quantitative information; Be able to communicate such analyses effectively through speaking, writing, and the use of graphics.

**Lane Community College:** Interpret, translate, and communicate quantitative information expressed in mathematical notation, graphs, charts, tables, symbols, or standard English

Interpret and make inferences from data; estimate outcomes where appropriate.

**Mt Hood Community College:**
- Apply appropriate quantitative skills for personal, academic and career purposes.
- Analyze, interpret and represent problem situations using numeric, graphic, algebraic, geometric and verbal models.
- Create, read and interpret tables and graphs in various real-world contexts.
- Determine if a solution is reasonable and independently verify the results.
- Clearly communicate a problem-solving process, results and conclusions using quantitative methods and correct mathematical syntax appropriate to level of study.

**Southern Oregon University:** Express and manipulate information and concepts through appropriate modes of reasoning
- Use mathematical symbols to represent real-world phenomena, answer questions based on linear and non-linear mathematical relationships, and express mathematical statements in plain language.
- Distinguish among facts, assumptions, and conclusions; use facts and assumptions to construct valid conclusions; apply theoretical constructs to explore the properties, behaviors, or identity of systems.

**Colorado State System:** The general education requirement in mathematics is designed to help students:
- Develop understanding of fundamental mathematical concepts and their applications.
- 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.
Arts and Letters

**Eastern Oregon University:** Be able to interpret aesthetic significance in an object, work, performance or experience through study and participation. Be able to demonstrate sensitivity to the arts as essential to a full life.

**Linn Benton Community College:**
- Be able to communicate an understanding of the cultural and/or historical contexts, connections with other disciplines, and relevance to their own lives.
- Understand the importance of self engagement, take responsibility for their own learning, and interact with others in a respectful manner.
- Analyze and evaluate using complex thinking.
- Be able to understand and appreciate creative works by engaging in their own creativity.

**Southern Oregon University:** Recognize human accomplishments in the creative and performing arts and understand the role of the humanities in clarifying individual and social values.
- Understand basic formal elements, principles, and compositional structures in cultural texts (e.g., theatre, media, music, language, literature).
- Understand the impact of cultural and historical factors on the creation and reception of texts (theater, media, music, language, literature).
- Understand how artistic and symbolic expressions reflect and influence individuals, cultures, and societies.

**N.C. State University:** Each course in the humanities category will provide instruction and guidance that help students to:
- Understand and engage in the human experience through the interpretation of human culture and artifacts (this objective must be the central focus of each humanities course); and
- Become aware of the act of interpretation itself as a critical form of knowing in the humanities; and
- Make academic arguments about the human experience using reasons and evidence for supporting those reasons that are appropriate to the humanities.

**Colorado State System:** The general education requirement in art and humanities is designed to help students:
- Recognize the different ways in which humans have perceived their world
- Deepen their understanding of how social, linguistic, religious, philosophical and historical circumstances shape the human environment
- Enhance their appreciation of the creative world
• Explore fundamental questions of value, meaning and modes of expression and creativity
• Investigate the cultural character and literatures of the human experience
• Learn to approach problems with greater awareness of their moral dimensions and ethical consequences
Social Sciences

**Eastern Oregon University:** Be able to demonstrate an understanding of environmental, health, religious, temporal, social, political, economic, and geographic concepts. Be able to develop informed judgments about the past by gathering relevant information, by placing it in context, by interpreting it and by using it to draw inferences about contemporary events and to plan for the future.

**Lane Community College:**
- Describe core aspects of today's integrated global society, including historical perspective, cross-cultural variation, gender issues, as well as group function, interaction and change.
- Understand diverse roots of our nation and world civilizations

**Linn Benton Community College:**
- Be able to recognize and articulate the interplay between social and/or natural forces and individuals.
- Use analytical thinking to draw reasonable conclusions from observations involving multiple sources.
- Be able to synthesize diverse perspectives that can be expressed in a coherent and applicable manner.
- Understand the importance of self-engagement, take responsibility for their own learning, and interact with others in a respectful manner.

**Mt Hood Community College:** Develop an understanding of the values, behaviors or viewpoints of people of diverse backgrounds within the contexts of human experiences.

**Southern Oregon University:** Understand fundamental concepts of social science and the interconnections among social institutions, values, individuals, and groups.
- Understand connections between individuals and social, economic, and/or political institutions.
- Understand current and historical perspectives relating to contemporary issues.
- Understand the interactions of and the competing demands upon our natural and social environments and resources.

**N.C. State University:** Each course in the social science category will provide instruction and guidance that help students to:
- 1. Understand at least one of the following: human behavior, mental processes, organizational processes, or institutional processes; and
- 2. Understand how social scientific methods may be applied to the study of human behavior, mental processes, organizational processes, or institutional processes; and
- 3. Use theories or concepts of the social sciences to understand real-world problems, including the underlying origins of such problems.
Colorado State System: The general education requirements in social sciences are designed to help students acquire a broad foundation in social science knowledge and ability to apply this understanding to contemporary problems and issues. Specifically the social science requirement helps students:
  • Gain insight into the methods of social sciences,
  • Understand historical and social frameworks,
  • Understand how individuals relate to the social world, past and present.
Science/Math/Computer Science

**Eastern Oregon University:** Be able to understand how observation and interpretation of phenomena in a systematic fashion form the basis for scientific inquiry.

**Lane Community College:**
- Apply the scientific method, incorporating the appropriate mathematical skills or processes as needed in various problem solving contexts
- Determine whether conclusions or solutions are reasonable, using inductive and deductive reasoning
- Understand fundamental concepts of physical and life sciences

**Southern Oregon University:** Understand the fundamental concepts, methods, and applications of the Natural Sciences and their impact on human experience.
- Understand major principles and theories of the Natural Sciences.
- Understand positive and negative effects of science and technology on human experience.
- Apply scientific and quantitative approaches to societal issues.

**N.C. State University:** Each course in the natural sciences will provide instruction and guidance that help the student to use methods and processes of science in testing hypotheses, solving problems and making decisions; and articulate, make inferences from, and apply to problem solving, scientific concepts, principles, laws and theories.

**Colorado State system:** Natural and physical sciences general education is designed to help students master scientific knowledge at a level that facilitates communication in an increasingly technological society, including:
- to instill a clear understanding of the basic scientific viewpoint
- to enable students to learn and use the scientific method
- to evaluate the impacts of science and technology on society
- to increase the level of science literacy
The college first year English Composition sequence prepares students for the writing, reading, and critical thinking they will do in college, in their careers, and in their lives as citizens.

The sequence introduces and develops the following:

**Rhetoric:** The art of presenting specific material to a specific audience in order to achieve a specific purpose in both informal and formal contexts; including the analysis of writing and speaking situations by subject, purpose, intended audience, and tone; as well as the use of strategies such as comparison, definition, description, process, etc. both as ways to think and as ways to organize material.

**Writing as Process:** The use of planning, drafting, revising, and editing in order to produce texts.

**Critical Thinking and Reading:** The exercise of analysis, evaluation, and judgment to determine quality and trustworthiness of source material, validity and strength of reasons, and the form and presentation of materials used and produced by students.

**Reflection:** Self-assessment of writing processes and rhetorical choices made in the contexts of personal and public writings.

The sequence is divided into the following three courses:

**WR 121:** This course teaches rhetoric, the writing process, critical thinking and reading at the college level while focusing on academic writing such as the essay and critical summary.

**WR 122:** This course continues the focus of WR 121 with the added emphasis of persuasion and argument supported by external research.

**WR 123:** This course continues the focus of WR 121 and 122 and emphasizes research: framing a research question, formulating a research strategy, finding and evaluating sources, and relating sources to each other and to the student’s own ideas on the topic. This course also emphasizes citing, documenting, and integrating source material into the student’s own text.

Learning about writing, like writing itself, is a recursive process. Students will continually need to revisit ideas and skills learned throughout the course sequence. This overview and the specific recommendations that follow do not exhaustively describe the courses. Rather, this document articulates guidelines and minimum curricular expectations for three first-year English Composition courses. Learning to write is a complex, individualized process which takes place over time with continued practice.

Undergraduate writing education provides the basis for the development of a literate citizenry and work force capable of reflective and critical inquiry.
**oweac recommendations (wr 121)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>writing process</th>
<th>purpose and audience</th>
<th>thesis</th>
<th>organization</th>
<th>rhetorical methods</th>
<th>development and support</th>
<th>critical thinking and reading</th>
<th>conventions and format</th>
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<tr>
<td>students will use the writing process: inventing, drafting, revising, and editing toward a final draft. at the invention stage, students will find a topic and develop and write on that topic from their own perspective. during drafting, students will employ processes and strategies which fit purpose, context, and audience. in revision, students will evaluate the effectiveness of their work with peer responders, tutors, and/or instructors, demonstrating a focused process of improvement from early to final drafts. finally, students will edit for correctness and clarity.</td>
<td>students will write expository essays to accomplish a clear purpose by adopting appropriate voice, tone, and level of formality as well as organizational pattern(s). students will produce academic writing addressed to an audience broader than the student writer or the instructor.</td>
<td>students will develop a controlling idea in each completed essay. the thesis must be clear and specific in order to express a focused approach to ideas, insights, and/or applications.</td>
<td>students will organize their essays with an introduction, logically arranged body paragraphs that develop the thesis, and a conclusion. connections between sections, paragraphs, and sentences will be clear. organization will reflect the scope and nature of the thesis.</td>
<td>students will demonstrate control of a variety of sentence types to achieve clear and fluent writing. students will develop paragraphs and make transitions aimed at making their writing more accessible to readers.</td>
<td>students will provide adequate explanatory details and reasons to develop the thesis. students will select and use appropriate techniques and materials to support their thesis, which may include rhetorical strategies, concrete detail, sensory and narrative detail, dialogue, summary of outside sources, synthesis of information from sources, and a conclusion.</td>
<td>students will look analytically at a text or situation as part of forming their own interpretation, supporting it with rational and logical thinking. students will demonstrate critical reading skills such as inference, judgment, and conclusion.</td>
<td>students will demonstrate the ability to use standard academic english in order to address an academic audience. sentence structures will be correct and chosen for effectiveness. students will demonstrate an appropriate variety of sentence structures. a few fragments may appear when stylistically appropriate. there will be few clichés; most idiomatic expressions will be used correctly. students will be able to use basic sentence punctuation correctly. there will be few mistakes in spelling or in the use of homonyms. final drafts of essays will be typed, will be double spaced, and will include an appropriate heading and a title. students will demonstrate the ability to summarize, paraphrase, and quote passages from sources. students will be introduced to mla (or apa or chicago) format, citation, and documentation.</td>
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**workload:** students will write 4-5 polished essays of more than 2 pages each. for each essay, students will submit evidence of using a writing process. the last essay should be at least 4 pages.
### OWEAC Recommendations (WR 122)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Writing Process</th>
<th>Purpose and Audience</th>
<th>Thesis</th>
<th>Organization</th>
<th>Rhetorical Methods</th>
<th>Development and Support</th>
<th>Critical Thinking and Reading</th>
<th>Conventions and Format</th>
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<td>In working through the writing process, students will generate ideas from texts and demonstrate the ability to evaluate those texts they choose to include in their final drafts for sound reasoning and validity of evidence.</td>
<td>Students will write persuasive or argumentative essays to accomplish a clear purpose by adopting appropriate voice, tone, and level of formality as well as organizational pattern(s). Students will anticipate and prepare for reactions to their text by an audience outside the classroom.</td>
<td>Students will include a thesis or claim in each completed essay that identifies the essay as a form of argument or analysis.</td>
<td>Students will use patterns of reasoning and formal logic in organizing their essays with an introduction, body, and conclusion. Students will organize support for a particular audience and for a particular purpose, such as argument, analysis, synthesis, or evaluation.</td>
<td>Students will use appropriate rhetorical strategies and reasons to support the thesis or claim. Students will employ rhetorical strategies for their own purposes, such as analysis, persuasion, argument, evaluation, and synthesis for a variety of audiences in order to develop the thesis and effectively organize the essay.</td>
<td>Students will use resources for their own purposes. These may include, but are not limited to, using appropriate outside sources, presenting good reasons, showing logical relationships, clarifying inferences, choosing appropriate language and using the most convincing evidence for the target audience.</td>
<td>Students will critically analyze texts and/or situations and not accept at face value what they see. Students will adopt the habit of looking closely and questioning not only the reliability of opinions and statements from sources, but also their own assumptions and opinions. Students will identify, evaluate, and use the elements of argument. Students will distinguish between observation, fact, inference, etc. Students will demonstrate practical application of concepts and skills.</td>
<td>Same as WR 121 but with more control. Students will effectively cite and document a variety of sources.</td>
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**Workload:** Students will write 4-5 polished essays of more than 3 pages each. For each essay, students will submit evidence of using a writing process. The last essay should be at least 5 pages.
# OWEAC Recommendations (WR123)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Writing Process</th>
<th>Purpose and Audience</th>
<th>Thesis</th>
<th>Organization</th>
<th>Rhetorical Methods</th>
<th>Development and Support</th>
<th>Critical Thinking and Reading</th>
<th>Conventions and Format</th>
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<td>Students will demonstrate successful use of the research process: writing research proposals, formulating incisive questions, conducting library and/or field research, taking careful notes, and compiling an annotated bibliography or review of literature. Students will evaluate the quality of information gained through primary and/or secondary research reliability, validity, and soundness of reasoning. Students will work through the writing process to produce a final draft that includes in-text citations and a bibliography.</td>
<td>Students will write a research paper which will attempt to persuade an informed and educated reader or assert a position taken by the writer. Students will use appropriate voice, tone, and formality. Students will select the appropriate documentation style (MLA, APA, or Chicago) for the topics they have chosen.</td>
<td>Students will write a research-based project with a clear thesis or claim that is arguable, unified, and sufficiently narrow.</td>
<td>Students will demonstrate the ability to organize longer research papers with an introduction, logically arranged body paragraphs that develop the thesis and synthesize information from a variety of sources, and a conclusion. Connections between sections, paragraphs, and sentences will be clear. Organization will reflect the scope and nature of the thesis.</td>
<td>Students will use appropriate rhetorical strategies as needed to support an argumentative or position-based thesis or claim in a research-based paper.</td>
<td>Students will develop a thesis or claim based on the evaluation and synthesis of primary and secondary sources. Students will thoroughly develop and support the thesis with a balanced and insightful presentation of evidence. Using quotations, summaries, and/or paraphrases, students will integrate their ideas and source material, being careful to differentiate source materials from their own ideas and carefully credit sources.</td>
<td>Students will research and synthesize disparate sources. Students will weigh various conclusions based on the evidence presented in order to build a credible research-based discussion of their own. Students' writing will evaluate not only the reliability but also the adequacy of sources and information.</td>
<td>Same as WR 122 but with more control. Students will demonstrate mastery of citation and documentation. Students will include index, pagination, and appropriately integrated visuals in their projects.</td>
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**Workload:** Students will write at least 15 pages of polished research-based writing. Students will submit evidence of using a writing process.
Examples of General Education Course Criteria

We have gathered examples of General Education course criteria that are already in use at individual colleges and universities, in Oregon and elsewhere, or statewide in Colorado. These may be useful as you formulate general criteria for statewide use in Oregon, and we’ve organized the examples by disciplinary area:

Writing
Oral Communication
Mathematics
Arts and Letters
Social Science
Science

The following definitions distinguish the criteria you’ll be working on at the April 27th meeting from the outcomes statements you wrote in February.

Definitions

Outcomes statements are broad. They describe the habits of mind, skills, or kinds of insight that we want students to acquire, and be able to use, as a result of taking courses in a particular area.

Criteria identify the characteristics of courses that we think have the best chance of producing the desired outcomes for students.
Writing

Oregon State University: Writing I courses shall

- Emphasize elements of critical thinking;
- Focus on the writing process, invention strategies, drafting and revision techniques, and the forms and conventions of writing;
- Emphasize the ability to analyze content and reader response;
- Require significant student practice coupled with evaluation;
- Encourage appreciation and understanding of language, form and style; and develop increasingly sophisticated and efficient writing strategies.

Writing II and Writing III courses shall

- Emphasize elements of critical thinking;
- Focus on relevant theory, concepts, and techniques for understanding the form of communication involved and for improving skills;
- Provide concepts and guidelines for determining effective communication within a specific area or discipline, including conventions of that field;
- Require significant student practice or performance coupled with evaluation; and encourage appreciation and understanding of language, form, and style.

Colorado State System: A communication course shall be designed to:

1. Develop rhetorical knowledge, including:
   a) Focus on a purpose.
   b) Use voice, tone, format and structure appropriately.
   c) Write and read texts written in several genres and for multiple discourse communities.

2. Experience in writing processes:
   a) Use multiple drafts.
   b) Develop strategies for generating, revising, editing, and proofreading.
   c) Learn to critique own and other’s work.
   d) Use a variety of technologies (writing and research tools).

3. Develop mastery of writing conventions
   a) Select appropriate format for different writing tasks.
   b) Apply genre conventions ranging from structure and paragraphing to tone and mechanics.
   c) Use specialized vocabulary, format and documentation appropriately.
   d) Control features such as syntax, grammar, punctuation, and spelling.

4. Demonstrate student’s comprehension of content knowledge through effective communication strategies, including:
   a) Ability to compose messages for specific purposes (e.g., expository, persuasive, technical, etc.).
   b) Ability to communicate to a variety of audiences.
   c) Ability to adapt content and style to respond to the needs of different audiences and different rhetorical situations.
Oral Communication

Oregon State University: Speech courses shall

- Emphasize elements of critical thinking;
- Focus on relevant theory, concepts, and techniques for understanding the form of communication involved and for improving skills;
- Provide concepts and guidelines for determining effective communication within a specific area or discipline, including conventions of that field;
- Require significant student practice or performance coupled with evaluation; and
- Encourage appreciation and understanding of language, form, and style.
Mathematics

Linn-Benton Community College: Mathematics courses shall emphasize
  • Elements of critical thinking
  • The solution and graphing of linear equations and systems of linear equations
  • Elementary linear programming
  • Descriptive statistics, understanding and interpretation of statistical statements, elementary probability and applications
  • Problem solving
  • Display and analysis of quantitative information in graphical form
  • Examples of major mathematical ideas and models in the real world (e.g. planetary motion, statistical correlations, and exponential growth).

Oregon State University: Mathematics courses shall
  • Emphasize elements of critical thinking;
  • Develop problem solving strategies; and
  • Include at least one significant mathematical model.
Arts and Letters

**Lane Community College:** Arts and Letters courses shall
- Have as their main focus the broad exploration of traditional liberal arts.
- Build upon already established basic skills
- Be grounded in theory, which in forms practice
- Develop critical thinking or creative application of ideas
- Emphasize the value of artistic expression and human creativity
- Incorporate interactive learning activities, including performance or studio experiences
- Require learning at the level of: analysis, synthesis, evaluation
- Require substantial out-of-class learning, related to course content, on the student’s part
- Require readings and research within experiential courses
- Develop students’ information literacy skills (use of library, internet, etc.)
- Connect course skills to other disciplinary learning
- Foster recognition of diverse humanity and build respect for human diversity

**Oregon State University:** Arts and Letters courses shall
- Emphasize elements of critical thinking;
- Place the subject(s) in historical context;
- Demonstrate interrelationships or connections with other subject areas;
- Focus primarily on literature or the arts;
- Actively engage students in significant works of literature or art;
- Explore the conventions and techniques of the form(s) under consideration;
- Address the role of literature or art in society; and
- Encourage appreciation and understanding of the form(s) under consideration.

**University of Oregon:** Group-satisfying courses in arts and letters must create meaningful opportunities for students to engage actively in the modes of inquiry that define a discipline. Proposed courses must be demonstrably liberal in nature and broad in scope. Though some courses may focus on specialized subjects or approaches, there must be a substantial course content locating that subject in the broader context of the major issues of the discipline. Qualifying courses will not focus on teaching basic skills but will require the application or engagement of those skills through analysis and interpretation.

**Colorado State System:** Humanities courses shall provide students experiences to
- Respond analytically and critically to cultural artifacts, including literature, music, and works of art by:
  a. Describing the basic elements and their effects on meaning in a work of art.
  b. Relating the effects of geography, economics, politics, religion, philosophy and science on the values of a culture and stylistic features of its arts.
  c. Determining how a work reflects or rejects the major values or concerns of a historical era or culture.
d. Interpreting themes or major concepts.

OR

- Compare and contrast attitudes and values of specific eras (e.g. the past to the present), or cultures (e.g. non-Western to Western culture).

OR

- Understand ways of thinking, including logic and ethics, or obtain a broad understanding of the different questions dealt with by leading philosophers and their positions on those questions.
Social Sciences

Lane Community College: Social Science courses shall
- Have as a main focus the exploration of a social science department discipline.
- Provide opportunities to develop information literacy in the social sciences (the ability to critically analyze, synthesize, and evaluate various forms of information including written texts and other media)
- Encourage the use of effective communication skills, such as active listening and the clear expression of ideas in speaking and writing
- Raise awareness of diversity issues and encourage respectful communication across cultural differences
- Use multiple theoretical approaches of a social science discipline to critically analyze problems and to develop recommendations for problem solving.
- Use multiple methodological approaches of a social science discipline to critically analyze problems and to develop recommendations for problem solving
- Encourage students to examine individual experiences and perspectives in relationship to course material
- Encourage multidisciplinary thinking.

Oregon State University: Social Science courses shall
- Emphasize elements of critical thinking;
- Place the subject(s) in historical context;
- Demonstrate interrelationships or connections with other subject areas;
- Focus on methods, concepts, and theories for understanding the structure and change of major social institutions, and for understanding individual behavior as part of a social dynamic;
- Examine the nature, value, and limitations of the basic methods of the social sciences, and discuss the interaction of the social sciences and society; and
- Provide a perspective on the evolution of the theories and ideas emphasized in the course.

University of Oregon: Group-satisfying courses in the Social Sciences must be liberal in nature rather than being professionally oriented or limited to the performance of professional skills. They must cover a representative cross-section of key issues, perspectives, and modes of analysis employed by scholars working on the subject matter addressed by the course. The subject matter of the course will be relatively broad, e.g. involving more than one issue, place, or time. Courses with an emphasis on methods and skills will satisfy the requirement only if there is also a substantial and coherent theoretical component.

Colorado State System: Social or behavioral science courses shall provide content knowledge in
- Historical frameworks exploring important aspects of U.S. culture, society, politics, economics or its position in the world; or historical frameworks that
explore and compare achievements, issues, and characteristics of the world and its cultures. The objective of the requirement that students take a course that provides content knowledge in history is to engage students in an analytical, chronological study of significant human experiences. Courses designed to achieve this objective should develop students’ (1) knowledge of a chronological structured analysis of significant human experiences; (2) understanding of the interpretive and analytical methods that are necessary to build accounts of the past; and (3) understanding that alternative analytical perspectives can create different narratives of the past.

OR
• Understanding of economic or political systems

OR
• Understanding how geography creates a sense of identity, shapes a culture, and influences the economics of a region.

OR
• Knowledge of human behavior, including learning, cognition, and human development or cultural or social frameworks that explore and compare achievements, issues, and characteristics of the world and its different cultures.
Science/Math/Computer Science

**Lane Community College:** Science/Math/Computer Science courses shall
- Be a minimum of three credits, regularly numbered offerings (not temporary or independent study).
- Have the main focus be the systematic study of a branch of science, math or the discipline of computer science.
- Build upon and apply a systematized body of knowledge or principles (through observation and experimentation for science.)
- Build a foundation to connect skills and knowledge to other disciplinary learning, thus meeting the needs of other programs and degree requirements.
- Develop ability to symbolically express relationships between figures, forms, and/or quantities.
- Communicate precisely, technically, quantitatively, and symbolically within a structured system.
- Use multiple approaches to develop critical analytical thinking that includes synthesis, evaluation, and creative insight.
- Require inductive and deductive reasoning.
- Provide exposure to both theory and practical applications.
- Require critical thinking and problem solving.

**Oregon State University:** Science courses shall
- Emphasize elements of critical thinking;
- Focus on the meaning of the fundamental concepts and theories that broadly characterize basic (rather than applied) physical or biological science;
- Illustrate, demonstrate, and analyze natural phenomena and systems;
- Provide historical perspectives and context on the evolution of major theories and ideas;
- Demonstrate interrelationships or connections with other subject areas; and
- Examine the nature, value, and limitations of scientific methods and the interaction of science with society. Science seeks to develop a fundamental description and understanding of the natural world, from elementary particles to the cosmos, including the realm of living systems. Students should have opportunity to explore the insights of science, to view science as a human achievement, and to participate in scientific inquiry. This experience includes the challenge of drawing conclusions based on observation, analysis, and synthesis.

**University of Oregon:** Group-satisfying courses in the Sciences should introduce students to the foundations of one or more scientific disciplines, or should provide an introduction to fundamental methods (such as mathematics) that are widely used in scientific disciplines. Courses should introduce students to the process of scientific reasoning. Although laboratory courses are not automatically excluded from Group-satisfying status in the sciences, to acquire this status, the courses must not focus primarily on techniques or data collection.
Colorado State System: Lecture content of science course shall
- Develop foundational knowledge in specific field(s) of science.
- Develop an understanding of and ability to use the scientific method.
- Recognize that science as a process involves the interplay of observation, experimentation and theory.
- Develop quantitative approaches to study natural phenomena.
- Identify, highlight interconnections between specific science courses being taught & larger areas of scientific endeavor.
- Distinguish among scientific, nonscientific, and pseudoscientific presentations, arguments and conclusions.

Laboratory content shall:
- Develop concepts of accuracy, precision, and the role of repeatability in the acquisition of scientific data.
- Be predominately hands-on and inquiry-based with demonstration components playing a secondary role.
- Emphasize a student’s formulation and testing of hypotheses with scientific rigor.
- Stress student generation and analysis of actual data, the use of abstract reasoning to interpret these data, and communication of the results of experimentation.
- Develop modern laboratory skills.
- Emphasize procedures for laboratory safety.
The college first year English Composition sequence prepares students for the writing, reading, and critical thinking they will do in college, in their careers, and in their lives as citizens.

The sequence introduces and develops the following:

**Rhetoric:** The art of presenting specific material to a specific audience in order to achieve a specific purpose in both informal and formal contexts; including the analysis of writing and speaking situations by subject, purpose, intended audience, and tone; as well as the use of strategies such as comparison, definition, description, process, etc. both as ways to think and as ways to organize material.

**Writing as Process:** The use of planning, drafting, revising, and editing in order to produce texts.

**Critical Thinking and Reading:** The exercise of analysis, evaluation, and judgment to determine quality and trustworthiness of source material, validity and strength of reasons, and the form and presentation of materials used and produced by students.

**Reflection:** Self-assessment of writing processes and rhetorical choices made in the contexts of personal and public writings.

The sequence is divided into the following three courses:

**WR 121:** This course teaches rhetoric, the writing process, critical thinking and reading at the college level while focusing on academic writing such as the essay and critical summary.

**WR 122:** This course continues the focus of WR 121 with the added emphasis of persuasion and argument supported by external research.

**WR 123:** This course continues the focus of WR 121 and 122 and emphasizes research: framing a research question, formulating a research strategy, finding and evaluating sources, and relating sources to each other and to the student's own ideas on the topic. This course also emphasizes citing, documenting, and integrating source material into the student's own text.

Learning about writing, like writing itself, is a recursive process. Students will continually need to revisit ideas and skills learned throughout the course sequence. This overview and the specific recommendations that follow do not exhaustively describe the courses. Rather, this document articulates guidelines and minimum curricular expectations for three first-year English Composition courses. Learning to write is a complex, individualized process which takes place over time with continued practice.

Undergraduate writing education provides the basis for the development of a literate citizenry and work force capable of reflective and critical inquiry.
WR 121

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Writing Process</th>
<th>Purpose and Audience</th>
<th>Thesis</th>
<th>Organization</th>
<th>Rhetorical Methods</th>
<th>Development and Support</th>
<th>Critical Thinking and Reading</th>
<th>Conventions and Format</th>
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<td>Students will use the writing process: inventing, drafting, revising, and editing toward a final draft. At the invention stage, students will find a topic and develop and write on that topic from their own perspective. During drafting, students will employ processes and strategies which fit purpose, context, and audience. In revision, students will evaluate the effectiveness of their work with peer responders, tutors, and/or instructors, demonstrating a focused process of improvement from early to final drafts. Finally, students will edit for correctness and clarity.</td>
<td>Students will write expository essays to accomplish a clear purpose by adopting appropriate voice, tone, and level of formality as well as organizational pattern(s). Students will produce academic writing addressed to an audience broader than the student writer or the instructor.</td>
<td>Students will develop a controlling idea in each completed essay. The thesis must be clear and specific in order to express a focused approach to ideas, insights, and/or applications.</td>
<td>Students will organize their essays with an introduction, logically arranged body paragraphs that develop the thesis, and a conclusion. Organization will reflect the scope and nature of the thesis.</td>
<td>Students will demonstrate control of a variety of sentence types to achieve clear and fluent writing. Students will develop paragraphs and make transitions aimed at making their writing more accessible to readers.</td>
<td>Students will provide adequate explanatory details and reasons to develop the thesis. Students will select and use appropriate techniques and materials to support their thesis, which may include rhetorical strategies, concrete detail, sensory and narrative detail, dialogue, summary of outside sources, synthesis of information from sources, and a conclusion.</td>
<td>Students will look analytically at a text or situation as part of forming their own interpretation, supporting it with rational and logical thinking. Students will demonstrate critical reading skills such as inference, judgment, and conclusion.</td>
<td>Students will demonstrate the ability to use standard academic English in order to address an academic audience. Sentence structures will be correct and chosen for effectiveness. Students will demonstrate an appropriate variety of sentence structures. A few fragments may appear when stylistically appropriate. There will be few clichés; most idiomatic expressions will be used correctly. Students will be able to use basic sentence punctuation correctly. There will be few mistakes in spelling or in the use of homonyms. Final drafts of essays will be typed, will be double spaced, and will include an appropriate heading and a title. Students will demonstrate the ability to summarize, paraphrase, and quote passages from sources. Students will be introduced to MLA (or APA or Chicago) format, citation, and documentation.</td>
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**Workload:**

Students will write 4-5 polished essays of more than 2 pages each. For each essay, students will submit evidence of using a writing process. The last essay should be at least 4 pages.
WR 122

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<tr>
<th>Writing Process</th>
<th>Purpose and Audience</th>
<th>Thesis</th>
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<td>In working through the writing process, students will generate ideas from texts and demonstrate the ability to evaluate those texts they choose to include in their final drafts for sound reasoning and validity of evidence.</td>
<td>Students will write persuasive or argumentative essays to accomplish a clear purpose by adopting appropriate voice, tone, and level of formality as well as organizational pattern(s). Students will anticipate and prepare for reactions to their text by an audience outside the classroom.</td>
<td>Students will include a thesis or claim in each completed essay that identifies the essay as a form of argument or analysis.</td>
<td>Students will use patterns of reasoning and formal logic in organizing their essays with an introduction, body, and conclusion. Students will organize support for a particular audience and for a particular purpose, such as argument, analysis, synthesis, or evaluation.</td>
<td>Students will use appropriate rhetorical strategies and reasons to support the thesis or claim. Students will employ rhetorical strategies for their own purposes, such as analysis, persuasion, argument, evaluation, and synthesis for a variety of audiences in order to develop the thesis and effectively organize the essay.</td>
<td>Students will use resources for their own purposes. These may include, but are not limited to, using appropriate outside sources, presenting good reasons, showing logical relationships, clarifying inferences, choosing appropriate language and using the most convincing evidence for the target audience.</td>
<td>Students will critically analyze texts and/or situations and not accept at face value what they see. Students will adopt the habit of looking closely and questioning not only the reliability of opinions and statements from sources, but also their own assumptions and opinions. Students will identify, evaluate, and use the elements of argument. Students will distinguish between observation, fact, inference, etc. Students will demonstrate practical application of concepts and skills.</td>
<td>Same as WR 121 but with more control. Students will effectively cite and document a variety of sources.</td>
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Workload: Students will write 4-5 polished essays of more than 3 pages each. For each essay, students will submit evidence of using a writing process. The last essay should be at least 5 pages.
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<tr>
<th>WR123 Writing Process</th>
<th>Purpose and Audience</th>
<th>Thesis</th>
<th>Organization</th>
<th>Rhetorical Methods</th>
<th>Development and Support</th>
<th>Critical Thinking and Reading</th>
<th>Conventions and Format</th>
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<td>Students will demonstrate successful use of the research process: writing research proposals, formulating incisive questions, conducting library and/or field research, taking careful notes, and compiling an annotated bibliography or review of literature. Students will evaluate the quality of information gained through primary and/or secondary research reliability, validity, and soundness of reasoning. Students will work through the writing process to produce a final draft that includes in-text citations and a bibliography.</td>
<td>Students will write a research paper which will attempt to persuade an informed and educated reader or assert a position taken by the writer. Students will use appropriate voice, tone, and formality. Students will select the appropriate documentation style (MLA, APA, or Chicago) for the topics they have chosen.</td>
<td>Students will write a research-based project with a clear thesis or claim that is arguable, unified, and sufficiently narrow.</td>
<td>Students will demonstrate the ability to organize longer research papers with an introduction, logically arranged body paragraphs that develop the thesis and synthesize information from a variety of sources, and a conclusion. Connections between sections, paragraphs, and sentences will be clear. Organization will reflect the scope and nature of the thesis.</td>
<td>Students will use appropriate rhetorical strategies as needed to support an argumentative or position-based thesis or claim in a research-based paper.</td>
<td>Students will develop a thesis or claim based on the evaluation and synthesis of primary and secondary sources. Students will thoroughly develop and support the thesis with a balanced and insightful presentation of evidence. Using quotations, summaries, and/or paraphrases, students will integrate their ideas and source material, being careful to differentiate source materials from their own ideas and carefully credit sources.</td>
<td>Students will research and synthesize disparate sources. Students will weigh various conclusions based on the evidence presented in order to build a credible research-based discussion of their own. Students’ writing will evaluate not only the reliability but also the adequacy of sources and information.</td>
<td>Same as WR 122 but with more control. Students will demonstrate mastery of citation and documentation. Students will include index, pagination, and appropriately integrated visuals in their projects.</td>
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**Workload:** Students will write at least 15 pages of polished research-based writing. Students will submit evidence of using a writing process.