

# General Education at WMU

Faculty Senate 3/2/17



WESTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY

# Mission Statement

Mission statement: Through learner-centered approaches, the WMU general education program will enable students to:

- Expand understanding of human cultures and the physical/natural world;
- Enhance intellectual and practical skills;
- Exercise personal and social responsibility;
- Exhibit integrative and applied learning.

# Content + Skills

- Skills are taught through content.
- Faculty focus groups will establish the learning outcomes for each course category.
- Assessment can be built into the course grade.

There is room for individuality.

# Structure

Level I: Foundations – 4 courses

Level II: Exploration and Discovery – 6 courses

Level III: Connections – 2 courses

# Progressive Skill-Building

Level I writing and critical thinking courses are pre-requisites for a Level II course that builds on those skills.

That Level II course is a pre-requisite for the two Level III courses, which further enhance those skills.

# Level I

- Writing
- Communication
- Quantitative Reasoning
- Inquiry & Engagement: Critical Thinking in the Arts and Humanities

# Level II

- Personal Wellness
- World Language & Culture
- Science & Technology
- Laboratory Science
- Artistic Theory & Practice
- **Societies & Cultures** (Social Sciences; critical skills course requiring Writing and Inquiry & Engagement as pre-requisites)

# Level III

- Local and National Perspectives
- Global Perspectives

(disciplinary content and critical skills development in a culmination of the program; these require Societies & Cultures as a pre-requisite)



# Flexibility

The levels provide a recommended sequence to the program as a whole, but most of the courses can be taken in any order.

# Purpose

Through learner-centered approaches, the WMU general education program will enable students to:

- Expand understanding of human cultures and the physical/natural world;
- Enhance intellectual and practical skills;
- Exercise personal and social responsibility;
- Exhibit integrative and applied learning.

# Merits

- The program integrates critical skills into content in a progression and provides breadth of knowledge areas.
- Along with the student's major, it ensures that every WMU student graduates with the essential skills and knowledge sets that are necessary to thrive in a rapidly changing world.

# Distinctive Features

- The program encourages a variety of pedagogical approaches and experiences, including interdisciplinary team-teaching, experiential learning, and study abroad.
- The Connections courses provide not only a “big question” type opportunity but ideally a contrastive method in which faculty from different disciplines approach the same topic from different perspectives.

## WMU Essential Student Learning Outcomes.

Through learner-centered approaches, the WMU General Education program will enable students to:

Expand their understanding of human cultures and the physical/natural world.

Enhance intellectual and practical skills.

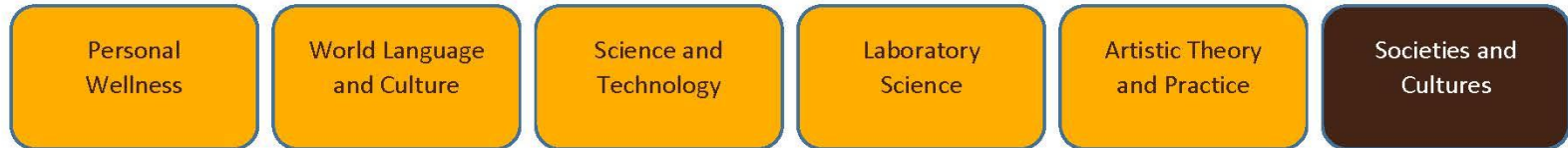
Exercise personal and social responsibility.

Exhibit integrative and applied learning.

### Connections



### Exploration and Discovery



### Foundations

