Southern OREGON UNIVERSITY

The Transforming General Education Task Force

Current Capacity Language

— Spring 2021 —

(Revised 05.21.2021)

The following language is offered to provide clarity on the learning objectives associated with each capacity. While the spirit of this work is settled, the specific language will continue to evolve. Approval of these capacities and the models that teach them should not negate the need for iterative improvement of the language, with the goal of making capacity language both legible and accessible to faculty and students alike.

Purposeful Living

The purposeful living capacity prepares students for personal and professional development and bridges higher education to their broader individual, community, and career goals. The skills offer a practical and purposeful approach to self-reflection, connection with others, communication of purpose, and adaptation of skills to an ever-changing world.

Students who have developed their capacity for Purposeful Living will:

1. *Clarify purpose and goals using self-reflection.*

   Example skills:

   - Identify individual values, beliefs, strengths, and interests.
   - Align behavior with individual values, beliefs, strengths and interests with the intention of building clear life purpose, including understanding challenges and strategies linked to achieving individual goals.
   - Investigate academic and career opportunities to discover links between purpose and paths to achievement.
   - Reflect on how individual purpose(s) transfer among multiple contexts (academic, professional, and personal).

2. *Build meaningful relationships with others within community.*

   Example skills:

   - Build and sustain meaningful relationships with people of diverse backgrounds, roles, and perspectives who provide guidance and support. (For example: connect with peers,

informational interviews, join clubs, meet with professors, site visits, job shadowing, and internships).

- ❖ Engage in civic, social, and communal institutions to build connections beyond the academic setting and co-create communities of mutual support.
- ❖ Effectively balance personal autonomy and community interdependence.

3. *Construct an integrated personal and professional narrative.*

Example skills:

- ❖ Effectively communicate life accomplishments to different audiences through written documents, verbal/visual presentations, online presence, creative expression, and digital platforms.
- ❖ Effectively communicate academic skills and/or training to professional contexts through skillful interviews, resumes, cover letters, or verbal/visual presentations.

4. *Plan and adapt for the future.*

Example skills:

- ❖ Plan for future educational and professional pursuits to engage lifelong learning and development.
- ❖ Seek and implement mentoring feedback to achieve professional and/or personal goals.
- ❖ Optimize emotional and physical health, including the ability to persevere constructively through setbacks and disappointments.
- ❖ Adapt skills and abilities so they may be transferrable to different contexts.

5. *Optimize emotional and physical health and wellbeing.*

Example skills:

- ❖ Understand how to persevere constructively through setbacks and disappointments.

Communication & Expression

The capacity for Communication and Expression prepares students to create, develop, and share ideas with specific audiences in mind and to receive, appreciate, and analyze others' ideas.

Students who have developed their capacity for Communication & Expression will:

1. *Identify and develop ideas.*

   Example skills:

   ❖ Adapt ideas to the needs of individuals, groups, and diverse cultural contexts.
   ❖ Identify and target multiple audiences as needed.
   ❖ Locate, evaluate, and use evidence relevant to the context (including genre, goals, audience, purpose, platforms, and modalities).

2. *Express ideas.*

   Example skills:

   ❖ Use relevant expression conventions for clarity and precision.
   ❖ Adopt genre and style appropriate to purpose and audience.
   ❖ Demonstrate clear and purposeful organizational structure.
   ❖ Use media and technologies in meaningful and innovative ways.

3. *Listen and receive ideas.*

   Example skills:

   ❖ Engage in active, sender-centered reception.
   ❖ Comprehend simultaneous modes of expression.
   ❖ Accurately identify, understand, interpret, and synthesize meanings embedded in multimodal expressions.
   ❖ Mindfully respond to reach mutual understanding.

4. *Analyze and appreciate ideas.*

   Example skills:

   ❖ Distinguish intent, influence, and impact of expressions.
   ❖ Analyze relevant components and structures in expressions.
   ❖ Evaluate the ethical elements of an expression.
   ❖ Critically reflect on one's own expressions.
   ❖ Articulate historical contexts and cultural influences of and on expressions.

Inquiry & Analysis

The Inquiry and Analysis capacity prepares students to ask meaningful questions, to gather, analyze, evaluate, and synthesize information, and to articulate how the process by which information is understood, consumed, and produced contributes to an understanding of the world and shapes decisions, conclusions, and actions.

Students who have developed their capacity for Inquiry & Analysis will:

1. *Ask meaningful research questions, propose hypotheses, and/or assert claims.*

   Example skills:
   - ❖ Ask research questions that are focused, interesting, feasible, and appropriate to the inquiry.
   - ❖ Present sufficient background information and context relevant to an inquiry.
   - ❖ Propose hypotheses that are testable or offer claims that are arguable.
2. *Understand the information gathering process.*

   Example skills:
   - ❖ Recognize the ways information is gathered, and which kinds of inquiry require certain methods.
   - ❖ Utilize any information-gathering method effectively and efficiently.
   - ❖ Articulate the method and the reliability, strengths, and weaknesses of the method.
3. *Analyze and evaluate information.*

   Example skills:
   - ❖ Evaluate information using multiple perspectives as warranted by the inquiry.
   - ❖ Assess information for credibility using criteria appropriate to the inquiry.
   - ❖ Determine relevance of information for the purposes of the inquiry.
   - ❖ Explain how knowledge is produced and consumed within disciplines.
4. *Form reasoned conclusions from information.*

   Example skills:
   - ❖ Draw conclusions that rely on diverse sources of information, including opposing viewpoints.
   - ❖ Identify the consequences and implications of a conclusion or an analysis.
   - ❖ Link evidence to claims and conclusions with valid, well-reasoned inferences.
   - ❖ Objectively reflect on one's own and others' claims and conclusions.
5. *Relate information to larger cultural, social, and historical contexts.*

   Example skills:
   - ❖ Understand how knowledge exists in broad cultural, social and historical contexts.
   - ❖ Connect knowledge formation and acquisition to broader contexts.
   - ❖ Synthesize primary or secondary analysis with discoveries in previous inquiry, analysis and scholarship.
   - ❖ Acknowledge shifts in human understanding based on knowledge developments within contexts.
   - ❖ Situate knowledge findings in a nuanced way within larger contexts.

Numerical Literacy

The capacity for Numerical Literacy develops students' ability to reason well and solve quantitative problems situated within a variety of disciplinary and interdisciplinary contexts. Students learn to ask mathematical questions about their world, identify appropriate methods to interpret data, and clearly communicate their results in a variety of formats.

Students who have developed their capacity for Numerical Literacy will:

1. *Assess the validity and analyze data.*

   Example skills:

   - ❖ Describe how data are found and constructed.
   - ❖ Describe and differentiate types of data.
   - ❖ Assess the quality of data.
   - ❖ Understand the limitations and analysis of both data and sampling.

2. *Apply mathematical operations accurately.*

   Example skills:

   - ❖ Show proficiency with number systems, mathematical operations and mathematical properties.
   - ❖ Reach valid conclusions relying on logical arguments/proofs.
   - ❖ Use computational tools or algorithmic procedures to automate quantitative analysis and decision-making.

3. *Express numerical data or quantitative information effectively.*

   Example skills:

   - ❖ Use mathematical notation appropriate to the description of quantitative values and concepts.
   - ❖ Express logical reasoning with accuracy and validity.
   - ❖ Represent mathematical or quantitative results via visual representations.

4. *Draw valid conclusions based on quantitative data and mathematical procedures.*

   Example skills:

   - ❖ Interpret the results of mathematical or quantitative inquiries.
   - ❖ Construct valid arguments based on quantitative data and mathematical or algorithmic procedures.
   - ❖ Rigorously assess mathematical or quantitative reasoning by others.

Creativity & Innovation

The Creativity and Innovation capacity prepares students to understand and engage in the creative process and to discover and implement original and useful approaches to projects and/or complex problems within any context or discipline. This capacity fosters the self-confidence and imagination necessary to innovate boldly and to bring a product or solution to fruition. Creativity that leads to innovation is an ongoing and iterative process, whereby students learn to improve their work through experimentation, ongoing practice, and by considering and incorporating feedback.

Students who have developed their capacity for Creativity & Innovation will:

1. *Recognize opportunities for creativity and innovation.*

   Example skills:

   - ❖ Survey the social, cultural, commercial or scholarly landscape to observe gaps that can be filled by new ideas
   - ❖ Understand the interests of audiences and users
   - ❖ Synthesize prior creative, intellectual or professional inspiration and context that might inform new creative or innovative solutions
   - ❖ Recognize the relative scale and complexity of challenges that lend themselves to creative solutions (including wicked problems)

2. *Communicate the intention and value of the innovative work or solution.*

   Example skills:

   - ❖ Express the objectives of the creative or innovative process
   - ❖ Advocate for the artifact or solution via diverse channels of communication

3. *Execute creative and innovative projects and solutions.*

   Example skills:

   - ❖ Propose innovative ideas for solving strategic problems or expressing personal creative inspiration
   - ❖ Assess available resources needed to accomplish specific creative or strategic initiatives
   - ❖ Connect with social networks, institutions or other collaboration partners as needed to accomplish creative or strategic initiatives
   - ❖ In the absence of clear guidelines, undertake plans and prototypes and work out first steps

4. *Iteratively improve their creative and innovative ideas.*

   Example skills:

   - ❖ Determine and apply appropriate means for assessing the success or failure of creative or strategic work
   - ❖ Respond to self-critique, external critique and audience participation with iterative improvements
   - ❖ Adapt plans and prototypes to changing conditions and unexpected outcomes, and resume progress following preliminary failures or dead ends
   - ❖ Complete the cycle of iterative learning to yield a creative artifact or solution that is ready for appreciation, consumption or use by others

Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion

The capacity for Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion prepares students to engage in the intentional, lifelong process of culturally affirming ways of being, interacting, and behaving. EDI connects learning and awareness among these frameworks, and the components are collective and do not stand alone. EDI develops skills in service of diverse, equitable, and inclusive living outcomes in local and global communities. EDI prioritizes critical awareness of historical and contemporary structural inequity and its causes and encourages the development of empathy, respect, and the ability to communicate across differences.

NOTE: The Task Force is awaiting feedback on this capacity from the President's Committee on Equity & Diversity, which is expected on May 24. For this reason, we will wait to provide the detailed proficiencies for this capacity.