

Valparaiso University Undergraduate General Education Learning Objectives

Adopted by the Faculty Senate, April 14, 2010

Philosophy of General Education

The educational philosophy of Valparaiso University grows from its strong commitment to both faith and learning. This commitment calls upon faculty and students to pursue knowledge freely, with intellectual honesty and responsibility. Also rooted in this commitment is the University's mission to equip its students to deal creatively and humanely with intellectual and ethical challenges that will face them not just in their careers but in all of life. It is with an understanding of the importance of helping its students to become reflective citizens ready to serve both society and church that Valparaiso University has developed its program of general education.

Further, in 2009 the Faculty Senate adopted a set of ten University-Wide Student Learning Objectives (USLO). Because the General Education Program is largely common to all undergraduates, it is the principal means by which VU achieves its USLOs.

Commensurate with the General Education mission and the USLOs, the University has developed the following Student Learning Objectives for the General Education Program. Nine of the overall general education learning objectives have been adopted directly from VU's ten USLOs. Specific responsibilities for these have been assigned to appropriate departments or programs that support the general education curriculum along with additional learning objectives specified by the departments or programs themselves. Two additional learning objectives unique to the General Education program have been added to these nine and labeled GSLOs 1 and 2.

Overall Objectives of the General Education Program:

- USLO 1 Students will demonstrate skill in various methods of acquiring knowledge in the humanities, social and natural sciences, quantitative reasoning, and the creative arts.
- USLO 2 Students will master and demonstrate content knowledge by using methods such as inference, generalization, and application.
- USLO 3 Students will become active learners by finding, analyzing, synthesizing, and evaluating information.
- USLO 4 Students will demonstrate the ability to build logical and persuasive arguments, cases reports, and / or responses.
- USLO 5 Students will communicate clearly and effectively in both oral and written forms.
- USLO 7 Students will interact and collaborate effectively in groups and teams.
- USLO 8 Students will explore the relationship between faith and learning.
- USLO 9 Students will practice the virtues of empathy, honesty, and justice in their academic endeavors.
- USLO 10 Students will appreciate that diversity in areas such as culture, gender, race, sexual orientation, and religion is pertinent to functioning successfully in a global community.

- GSLO 1 Students will appreciate the importance of mental, emotional, and physical well-being.
- GSLO 2 Students will recognize that the acquisition of knowledge is a life-long process, and that the truly educated person is not simply a narrow specialist but able to integrate learning from different fields of inquiry.

Freshman Core Program:

USLOs 2-5 and 7-10. GSLO 2.

1. Students will demonstrate recognition and understanding of cultural differences encountered in texts and articulate connections that may transcend them.
2. Students will show an understanding and basic appreciation of the affective dimension of a text.

Theology:

USLOs 2-5, 8, 10.

1. Students will demonstrate a familiarity with significant aspects of Christianity, with special attention to the religiously pluralistic nature of the world. Such familiarity includes understanding Christianity's technical vocabulary, classic texts, history and practices, and chief problems.

Cultural Diversity: Foreign Languages and Diversity Course

USLOs 1, 2, 3, 7, 9, 10.

1. Students will demonstrate an acquisition of the four skills of reading, writing, listening, and speaking appropriate to a specific level of the target language.
2. Students will demonstrate an awareness of language and its structure.
3. Students will demonstrate an understanding that one communicates in a foreign language through language skills along with a critical consideration of the culture, beliefs, traditions, values, and ways of life of those who speak the target language.
4. Students will demonstrate an understanding of diversity within the historical development of a cultural tradition, or knowledge acquired by a comparative study of contrasting cultures, or knowledge acquired by an examination of minority traditions within a dominant culture.

Humanities:

USLOs 1-5. GSLO 2.

1. Students will demonstrate an understanding of fundamental intellectual, aesthetic, metaphysical, and/or ethical dimensions of human existence.

2. Students will demonstrate knowledge of how the past connects with the present through history, literature, and the creative arts in the Western and/or non-Western intellectual traditions.

Social Sciences:

USLOs 1-5, 10.

1. Students will demonstrate an understanding of the many and varied systems that comprise society, how these change over time, and what the students' places and roles are within those systems.
2. Students will explore the interactive relationship between society and the environment as it involves topics like resource use, conservation, health, and food production.

Quantitative Analysis:

USLOs 1-4.

1. Students will express contextual problems in both abstract and symbolic forms as well as analyze relationships through symbolic, graphical, and statistical means.

Natural Sciences:

USLOs 1-3. GSLO 2.

1. Students will understand the methodology of science as a way of knowing about the world.
2. Students will achieve a level of scientific literacy that enables them to both use the language of science appropriately and critically evaluate science as portrayed in media and popular culture.

Health and Wellness:

GSLO 1.

1. Students will identify a holistic approach to health and fitness that incorporates affective, cognitive, and motor domains.