

3.B - Core Component 3.B

The institution demonstrates that the exercise of intellectual inquiry and the acquisition, application, and integration of broad learning and skills are integral to its educational programs.

1. The general education program is appropriate to the mission, educational offerings, and degree levels of the institution.
2. The institution articulates the purposes, content, and intended learning outcomes of its undergraduate general education requirements. The program of general education is grounded in a philosophy or framework developed by the institution or adopted from an established framework. It imparts broad knowledge and intellectual concepts to students and develops skills and attitudes that the institution believes every college-educated person should possess.
3. Every degree program offered by the institution engages students in collecting, analyzing, and communicating information; in mastering modes of inquiry or creative work; and in developing skills adaptable to changing environments.
4. The education offered by the institution recognizes the human and cultural diversity of the world in which students live and work.
5. The faculty and students contribute to scholarship, creative work, and the discovery of knowledge to the extent appropriate to their programs and the institution's mission.

Argument

WSU's vision and mission articulate the goal of preparing a diverse student body to thrive in an urban and global environment through courses of study, opportunities to participate in research, and co-curricular experiences. At the heart of the university's mission of excellence is a core program of [General Education](#) (GenEd). The GenEd curriculum prepares students for post-university life in two ways. Skills taught and acquired are basic to further formal education on the graduate and professional levels and to most career paths (oral and written communication, critical thinking) as well as for good citizenship in an interconnected world (historical studies, American politics, foreign culture).

The GenEd program was established in 1987 and revised in 2006. [Statute 2.43.03](#) documents BOG approval of the GenEd program; [University Policy 04-07](#) delegates responsibility for this process to the Provost, who acts in conjunction with the faculty and academic staff.

Current GenEd Program

The GenEd program is required of all undergraduate students pursuing bachelor's degrees, regardless of their academic specialties. GenEd requirements are organized into competencies and group requirements.

- *Competencies* provide students with the foundational skills necessary for learning in college and for future careers, including explicit coursework in critical/analytic thinking, mathematics, oral communications, and written communication.
- Through *Group Requirements*, students acquire a broad range of knowledge and develop methodological skills that encourage continued exploration on an independent level in arts and humanities, natural science, and society and institutions.

Transfer students are required to complete all university GenEd requirements, either by taking courses on campus or transferring credits from coursework completed at another university. Currently, two agreements govern transfer of GenEd credits:

- Michigan Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers ([MACRAO](#)) transfer agreement; and
- The [Michigan Transfer Agreement \(MTA\)](#)

MACRAO is [currently being phased out](#), to end completely by 2019. Phase-in implementation for the MTA began in 2014 and is the guiding policy moving forward.

Transfer students who cannot fulfill GenEd requirements upon admission must complete all of them on campus after enrollment.

Ongoing revisions of the GenEd program are initiated by the [General Education Oversight Committee \(GEOC\)](#), co-chaired by the Associate Provost for Student Success and the Associate Provost for Academic Programs. The GEOC refines and modifies learning outcomes for the GenEd program in an advisory capacity to the Provost. GEOC also approves courses that meet GenEd learning outcomes, and assesses learning outcomes. Examples of recent GEOC recommendations that were implemented with the approval of the Provost:

- Changing the passing score for the Critical Thinking Exam ([December 2013](#))
- Eliminating the Computer Literacy requirement ([June 2014](#))
- Including statistics as a third pathway to achieve Math Competency, and changes in specific course requirements. ([February 2015](#))

Most recently, the committee has discussed the GenEd Math Competency requirement while the completion of an overarching review of the program presently underway.

GenEd Program Revision in Progress

In November 2014, the Provost [charged](#) a faculty committee, the [General Education Reform Committee \(GERC\)](#), with reviewing the current GenEd program, its relevance to the mission and to students and their degree attainment, and with recommending revisions.

The GERC articulated a guiding principle that its work would be “*an open conversation with the entire campus community*,” branded its charge as “[Engaging GenEd](#),” and defined and completed a four-phase process:

1. Data Collection: Through [focus groups](#) and [student, tenured and tenure-track, non-tenure track](#), and [academic and administrative staff](#) surveys to understand the perspectives of students, faculty, and staff; and through research and evaluation of national models; the GERC identified [strengths and weaknesses](#), [shared values](#) and [goals](#) for future GenEd.
2. Values and Parameters: [Guiding Principles](#) for future GenEd.
3. Outcomes and Objectives: Proposed [learning outcomes](#)
4. Curriculum Design: Proposed [framework](#) aligned with the Guiding Principles.

In fall 2016 the provost [charged](#) GERC to [continue to solicit feedback](#) and [cultivate consensus](#) with faculty and faculty governance. Implementation of a revised curriculum is expected after fall 2018.

Programs Engage Students in Collecting, Analyzing, and Communicating Information, Mastering Modes of Inquiry or Creative Work, and Developing Skills for Changing Environments

Building on the groundwork for basic skills established in the GenEd curriculum, which requires all undergraduate students to take courses in critical/analytic thinking, mathematics, oral communications, and written communication, all students are required to complete at least one [writing-intensive](#) course before graduation.

Every program carries out a form of outcome assessment to measure students' acquisition of program goals. (See 4.B.) As an example, all university undergraduate degree programs emphasize communication, both [written](#) and [oral](#), and the use of precise and thoughtful language. Students are stimulated to [think critically](#) and to become familiar with the tools of research (example, [Chemistry](#)) so that learning becomes a lifelong process.

Within the classroom, membership in the [PACE Partnership](#) provides students with access to industry-standard software tools to support their design and analysis work. Programs such as biomedical engineering integrate these tools into the classroom, from freshman year through graduate level coursework, in order to build student confidence and comfort with using the latest in engineering applications.

Through [undergraduate](#) and [graduate](#) service-learning, internships, field work, research, public performance, or capstones in the major, students learn and apply skills outside of the classroom; relate the experience of engaged learning to intellectual, personal, professional, and/or civic development; and connect the engaged learning experience to the university's mission. Approved courses meet strict criteria based on research and best practices in experiential learning, and student learning outcomes are assessed using a standard assignment and rubric. (See Section 3.C. for examples.).

At the graduate level, the university engages students in higher-level skills with support for [travel and research](#), and [academic and professional development workshops](#). All instruction involves professional and/or academic preparation for lifelong skill acquisition (be it the development of laboratory skills, documentary research, or continued professional education).

The Education Offered Recognizes Human and Cultural Diversity

The university understands the relationship between its mission and the diversity of society. Building on the multicultural initiatives presented in Section 1.C.:

- GenEd learning outcomes call for the experience of diverse ideas, worldviews, and people; demonstration of cross-cultural or multicultural understanding; and an understanding of learning in the context of the larger community and world. These outcomes are achieved, in part, through the Society and Institutions group requirement covering American society and institutions, foreign culture, historical studies, and social science.
- Numerous degree programs and courses include the study of non-Western or non-dominant languages, cultures, or regions (examples are offerings in the departments of Music, Art & Art History, History, Anthropology, Linguistics, and Classical and Modern Languages, Literatures and Cultures).
- The university offers [study abroad opportunities](#) at 127 institutions in 39 countries, coordinated by The Office of Study Abroad and Global Programs.

The health professions programs strive to foster learning environments in which differences are valued and learners are trained to be culturally competent professionals prepared to meet the needs of diverse patient populations. Each program actively recruits and retains URM students, faculty, and staff; and the university offers a number of workforce pipeline programs to promote health careers in URMs and to increase diversity in the health professions. Several examples are provided in Section 1.C.

Health professions programs offer didactic and clinical/experiential coursework through which learners develop an awareness of the cultural and racial diversity of patients/clients and an understanding of the social determinants of health, with the goal of improving access to healthcare and reducing disparities in health for all patients/clients. For example, the College of Nursing ([NUR 7226](#)) uses a cultural competency module developed by the DHHS Office of Minority Health with the following learning outcomes:

- Identify at least five areas related to cultural and linguistic competency in medical practice.
- Identify at least three strategies to promote self-awareness about attitudes, beliefs, biases, and behaviors that may influence clinical care.
- Devise strategies to enhance skills toward the provision of care in a culturally competent clinical practice.
- Demonstrate the advantages of the adoption of the *National CLAS Standards* in clinical practice.

Many clinical placement sites serve diverse populations and provide learners with opportunities to develop the communication and clinical skills necessary to provide equitable and safe care to all patients. Many health professions programs require community outreach and service in their curricula to foster an awareness and appreciation for the diversity of patients/clients.

Faculty and Student Contributions to Scholarship, Creative Work, and the Discovery of Knowledge

The university's Carnegie Basic Classification of [R1, Doctoral University: Highest Research Activity](#) is evidence of faculty and student contributions to scholarship.

Faculty and academic staff in research-related positions engage in scholarship and creative activity as part of their university responsibilities, with the research level of effort ranging by academic unit. Pre-tenure, promotion and tenure, and merit salary increase policies and procedures articulate university-wide expectations for faculty scholarship and creative activity. (See Section 3.C.)

WSU, with its University Research Corridor partners (Michigan State University and the University of Michigan) acts as a powerful economic engine for the state, contributing \$16.5B to Michigan's economy in 2015, according to the [Tenth Annual Economic Impact Report](#). Reflecting the diversity of disciplines and program missions, expectations of faculty are detailed in individual department guidelines, as explained in Criterion 3.C, as well as criteria for [Graduate Faculty status](#) and recognition through awards and internal grants for scholarship.

Undergraduate students are engaged in a range of research activities across disciplines and schools and colleges. The [Undergraduate Research Opportunities Program](#) offers funded fellowships that provide 30 to 35 undergraduate students every semester the experience of conducting research with a mentor. Mentors may be faculty members, graduate students, or a community partner. The annual [Undergraduate Research Conference](#) features the work of many of these students, as well as those who carry out research with faculty mentors outside of the program. Faculty participation continues to grow on the searchable database, [UROPCconnect](#), which connects students with projects and mentors. Several units offer financial support and recognition to students who conduct outstanding research and creative activity; examples include the [College of Engineering](#), the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, and the Honors College. Many students, depending on their major, have the opportunity to work as undergraduate research assistants alongside faculty and graduate students in labs and creative studios. Additional undergraduate research opportunities are also publicized, including the [Undergraduate Research and Creative Project Conference](#), the [Undergraduate Research/Creative Project Award](#), and the [National Conference on Undergraduate Research](#). Undergraduate students can also participate in the [Michigan Louis Stokes Alliance Minority Participation](#), and the Humanities-focused [Rushton Undergraduate Conference](#) in Language, Literature, and Culture.

Graduate education is intended and designed to encourage the acquisition and generation of new knowledge and, depending on the degree, the application of this knowledge. Faculty, staff, post-doctoral associates and students contribute to creative and scholarly work. Common to all graduate research degrees is an emphasis on developing the research ability of a student through a project carried out by the student under the supervision of a faculty advisor and that builds on the innate curiosity common to students seeking an advanced degree. Students in Ph.D. programs are required to prepare a dissertation that represents a significant contribution to existing knowledge in the student's field. In many, but not all, fields, at least a portion of the content must

be suitable for publication in a reputable professional journal or as a book or monograph. Of 200 dissertations completed in 2014 and 2015, [38% yielded publications related to the dissertation topic](#).

The university [supports graduate students](#) through graduate assistantships, both in teaching and in research. Graduate students have access to travel awards that enable them to share their work widely through regional, national and international conferences. The funds are exhausted yearly given the level of activity of graduate students, and are supplemented by discretionary funds in schools and colleges.

The competitive [Graduate and Postdoctoral Research Symposium](#), a campus-wide event, provides graduate students the opportunity to present research to faculty judges and peers from across the university. In this last year students gave more than 140 poster presentations and the new three-minute dissertation presentation. Some 40 students saw their work recognized for excellence at this event.

The university offers guidance and career development programs to doctoral students and postdoctoral fellows planning a career path outside of academics:

- [BEST \(Broadening Experiences in Scientific Training\)](#), is a National Institutes of Health-funded alternative career development program for graduate students and postdoctoral candidates in biomedical sciences; the university is one of 17 BEST institutions. BEST seeks to transform graduate education so that non-academic careers are viewed as positive outcomes.
- In addition, the university holds a [National Endowment for the Humanities Value of the Humanities in the Global City](#) planning grant to broaden career preparation in the humanities beyond academe.
- The [Innovation Fellows program](#) for postdoctoral fellows is designed to foster the next generation of chief scientific officers and entrepreneurial scientists for high tech industries with the skills and knowledge to advance technology from the bench to the marketplace. In addition to their research projects, the fellows undertake curricular activities in technology and market assessment, product development, and business and entrepreneurship. The fellows are assigned an industry mentor to guide them through the development of technology commercialization roadmaps.

The [Graduate School Dashboard](#) provides a wide range of information about the university's doctoral students. The dashboard promotes better understanding of any given year's class, and provides longitudinal data about graduate degree attainment and career paths.

Other programs serve both undergraduate and graduate students:

- Entrepreneurship: The university developed the Business of Biotech course (BMS 7110) for master's and Ph.D. students to provide the foundation for innovation and commercialization in biomed technologies insight into alternate careers for biomedical scientists such as patent agents/lawyers, regulatory affairs, venture capital advisors, etc. The university recently added a companion course, Special Topics in Biomedical

Commercialization (BMS 7115) to provide hands-on experience in developing and presenting an “investor pitch” based on biomedical technologies. Other programs exist in [Music Business](#), and a new [undergraduate certificate in entrepreneurship](#) in the Mike Ilitch School of Business.

- The university has built an entire ecosystem to nurture budding entrepreneurs, whether they are undergraduates, graduate students, or faculty and staff. The [Blackstone Launchpad](#) project is at the center of this support, with programs such as the Warrior Lab Incubator. The Warrior Lab Incubator is a weekly series featuring presentations and workshops from successful Wayne State University entrepreneurs. The series focuses on five key areas that Blackstone has identified for entrepreneurial success: legal, accounting and finance, marketing, technology, and sales. Additionally, [TechTown](#) Detroit co-sponsors and hosts DTX Launch Detroit, a 10-week technology startup accelerator for college students and recent graduates.

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