

Approved by Faculty Senate at 2/5/09 Meeting

**Morehead State University
General Education Program**

Preface

A primary goal of colleges and universities since their inception has been to ensure that students receive a general education. In this era of increasing specialization and emphasis on vocational preparation, it is essential that colleges and universities remain committed to providing a general education.

Morehead State University remains committed to the idea that a university education is more than preparation for a career. A career is an important element of life, but learning to “live well” must have equal consideration with “making a living.” Therefore, Morehead State University remains committed to providing all students, regardless of their academic major or professional or vocational objectives, a general education.

The general education program will provide students with a foundation of knowledge and skills vital for any life they choose. A general education provides the student with indispensable knowledge about nature and culture, our social institutions, and our humanity. It assists students in the acquisition of those skills needed in order to learn anything, within the university or beyond. Such preparation will provide students the attributes needed to participate intelligently and responsibly in the discourses that shape the communities in which we live.

The “general” in general education is not to be confused with “minimal” or “unexceptional” and thereby unworthy of serious attention. General education is more than the acquisition of information or skills for daily life; it transcends the merely factual to raise and engage evaluative and philosophical questions. General education submits the fundamental principles and suppositions of a body of knowledge to inquiry and discussion. It challenges students to uncover and examine the assumptions under which they operate. General education aims to form in students a questioning spirit that will continue through their college career and their life as a whole.

Morehead State University is committed to student success. This includes assisting students, through advising in an appropriate field of study, in their efforts to secure employment following graduation. An equally pressing responsibility is to form students possessing the characteristics of a generally educated person – a condition marked, above all, by the capacity to live a thoughtful and responsible life. These twin components of success coexist within our institution

and provide the grounds for development of the kind of people who can secure their own well-being while contributing to their communities, their professions, and the world in which they live.

Introduction

In January 2008, the Faculty General Education Advisory Committee created the Student Learner Outcomes subcommittee. This group studied the current Morehead State University General Education Goals, researched the higher education literature to identify sound models of student learner outcomes, and drafted a preliminary outcomes document. They then selected models of student learner outcomes for reflection by the MSU community and conducted a survey on those models. After carefully reviewing the thoughtful and occasionally conflicting feedback received from faculty, they drafted a new outcomes document in light of that feedback and the best practices outlined in both the AAC&U's publications and models. This document was unanimously approved by the FGEAC and presented to the Faculty Senate, whose members provided further suggestions. The following draft incorporates revisions designed to address these most recent concerns. In all cases, the Student Learner Outcomes subcommittee privileged brevity, clarity, and the articulation of truly *general* outcomes and skills (meaning that we avoided including discipline specific skills as well as learner outcomes that would require or privilege a specific course). Finally, it had to be possible for all students to DEMONSTRATE these core skills once they had completed their general education course work.

Student Learner Outcomes **for the Morehead State University** **General Education Program**

1. Communication Skills

Students will demonstrate ability to:

- 1a. Listen and speak effectively in conversational, small group, public and intercultural contexts
- 1b. Read college-level critical, creative and technical texts for comprehension
- 1c. Write effectively for a variety of target audiences using conventions associated with standard English
- 1d. Convey quantitative and qualitative relationships using symbols, equations, graphs, and tables

2. Intellectual Skills

Students will demonstrate ability to:

- 2a. Employ current technologies to locate, analyze, evaluate and use information in multiple contexts and for a variety of purposes
- 2b. Recognize and effectively utilize both deductive and inductive reasoning
- 2c. Thoughtfully analyze and evaluate diverse points of view
- 2d. Perceive and articulate ethical consequences of decisions and actions
- 2e. Apply knowledge and skills to new settings and complex problems
- 2f. Explore the connections among practical, esoteric, critical and creative thinking

3. Quantitative Skills

Students will demonstrate ability to:

- 3a. Analyze situations and/or problems using arithmetic, geometric, algebraic and statistical methods
- 3b. Use deductive reasoning in a formal, symbolic, axiomatic system
- 3c. Verify answers to mathematical and scientific problems in order to determine reasonableness, identify alternative methods of solution, and select the most reliable results

4. Knowledge of Human Cultures

Students will demonstrate ability to:

- 4a. Examine the history of the United States and explain the basic principles and operation of the United States government with a view to being a responsible citizen
- 4b. Investigate the worldview and/or history of cultures outside the United States
- 4c. Analyze cultural, social, economic, geographic and historical dynamics that influence individuals and groups
- 4d. Comprehend the cycle of human growth necessary to provide sustained health and individual well-being

5. Knowledge of the Natural World

Students will demonstrate ability to:

- 5a. Comprehend and apply basic scientific, quantitative, and technological methods and knowledge of natural systems to the solution of scientific problems
- 5b. Employ scientific methods and theories to analyze and address open and debated questions in the sciences
- 5c. Analyze explanations to classify them as scientific or nonscientific

6. Knowledge of Aesthetics

Students will demonstrate ability to:

- 6a. Analyze the significance of diverse creative productions and explain how ideas are communicated effectively through the expressive arts (literature, theatre, dance, music, and visual arts)
- 6b. Describe and analyze the aesthetic value of creative productions in cultural and historical context