

Montana State University-Northern General Education Course Inclusion Policy

Purpose: The purpose of core courses is to ensure a wide-ranging general education regardless of the student's major or area of study. Core courses allow students to reaffirm their common experiences, redefine their common goals, and confront their common problems. Core courses emphasize communication and techniques of creative inquiry in a variety of disciplines.

Guidelines for course inclusion in the General Education core are:

1. Courses should be at the 100 or 200 level (few exceptions).
2. Course must substantially satisfy the outcome objectives of a particular area to be included (80%).
3. The total number of courses to be used in an area be limited to no more than 10.
4. General Education Courses will not have prerequisites.

The following provides expectations/objectives of each category:

Category I – Communication

Students are expected to demonstrate the following outcomes upon successfully completing this category:

1. Write clear, accurate sentences and paragraphs in standard American English.
2. Write extended papers which effectively develop and support theses, tell stories, describe events, and/or express feelings, insights and personal values.
3. Demonstrate the ability to communicate effectively in written form through the sorts of writing most common in the student's chosen career area.
4. Identify and incorporate research materials into informative and analytical writing.
5. Demonstrate the ability to select, develop and deliver an effective oral presentation to a target audience for specific purposes.
6. Demonstrate an awareness of the oral communication process, including critical listening skills.

Category II - Mathematics

Students are expected to demonstrate the following outcomes upon successfully completing this category:

1. Solve problems through mathematical reasoning using calculators and computers
2. Describe or demonstrate how mathematical models or statistical designs are used to obtain knowledge in several disciplines
3. Perform mathematical applications beyond intermediate algebra
4. Demonstrate understanding of the discipline of mathematics through multiple means of oral, written and visual assessment

Category III - Natural Sciences

Students are expected to demonstrate the following outcomes upon successfully completing this category:

1. Describe the processes of observation, problem identification, hypothesis formulation, experimentation and verification which underlie scientific advancement.
2. Systematically develop principles for comprehension of the natural world
3. Demonstrate an appreciation for Laboratory Practice:
 - a. Demonstrate the ability to design an experiment.
 - b. Identify a properly designed experiment.
 - c. Study physical objects in a direct manner which yields verifiable knowledge.
 - d. Utilize laboratory equipment in a way that helps one appreciate both the power of technology and the dependence of contemporary scientific insight on the technology.

Category IV - Social Sciences

Students are expected to demonstrate the following outcomes upon successfully completing this category:

1. Describe the diversity of focus, methodology and intention among the social sciences and within at least one of them.
2. Discuss the role and impact in daily existence of such major social institutions as the family, education, business, government, and religion.
3. Analyze how institutions and traditions are born, evolve, and die, and how they shape the lives of individuals.
4. Identify how the social sciences study human development, behavior, and health (sickness), and set forth influential psychological and sociological theories about these issues.
5. Gather information, analyze data, and draw conclusions in selected areas of the social sciences.

Category V - History

Students are expected to demonstrate the following outcomes upon successfully completing this category:

1. Recognize processes of continuity and change which have shaped events up to the present.
2. Identify and describe the characteristics of a major era in world history or international relations, thereby providing a framework for comprehending aspects of human experience.
3. Explain how human experiences give rise to movements, institutions, traditions, and ideas which have a subsequent influence.
4. Analyze factors leading to the dominance or suppression of selected racial, gender, ethnic, class, and religious groups.
5. Analyze of the extent to which individuals (in contrast to physical or social forces) are able to influence events, making reference to illuminating examples.
6. Use factual and interpretive data to support historical or political hypotheses.

Category VI - Cultural Diversity

Students are expected to demonstrate the following outcomes upon successfully completing this category:

1. Describe and compare the political, socio-economic, philosophical-spiritual, historic, scientific and literary-creative perspectives of various ethnic groups or cultures.
2. Analyze social problems, social structures and human behaviors of an ethnic group or culture
3. Examine how generalizations are developed and how stereotyping and prejudice have been addressed historically and currently.

Category VII - Fine Arts

Students are expected to demonstrate the following outcomes upon successfully completing this category:

1. Demonstrate skills in practice of a fine art such as visual art, performing art, or literary art.
2. Describe the basic elements and practices of a fine art during the important eras of its development.
3. Make informed judgments concerning the aesthetic, entertainment, and intellectual value of a work in an area of fine art.
4. Recognize contributions of literature, music, theatre, or visual art in the development of insight into human capabilities, dilemmas, and aspirations.
5. Develop an appreciation for the creative process in developing concepts in a fine art work.

Category VIII - Humanities

Students are expected to demonstrate the following outcomes upon successfully completing this category:

1. Discuss great works of literature, drama, or visual art which have decisively influenced or been influenced by the course of history.
2. Describe and critically assess prominent theories about the nature of reality, the qualities of the good life, and the ways in which life may be meaningful.
3. Be able to compare the beliefs of different cultures reflected by literature, music, art and language.
4. Articulate a tentative personal philosophy of life informed by experience and study

Category IX - Technology

Students are expected to demonstrate two or more of the following outcomes upon successfully completing this category:

1. Explain the impact of technology on society and conversely, how society impacts technology in a historical, present and future sense
2. Critically assess current and future trends in technology
3. Describe the past and future implications of technology on society
4. Explicate the historical importance of technology in societal change and the role of technology in future changes
5. List technology's role in problem solving and communication
6. Describe the ethical, legal and social concerns stemming from advances in technology
7. Demonstrate an ability to use technology within a discipline
8. Demonstrate an introductory level of technology literacy