



General Education at Michigan Technological University Houghton, MI

Description: The General Education program at Michigan Tech is built around six of the University's eight student learning goals (USLGs). These six are as follows: Communication, Information Literacy, Global Literacy, Critical and Creative Thinking, Social Responsibility and Ethical Reasoning, and Knowledge of the Physical and Natural World. The 39-credit structure comprises four parts: 1) a core set of courses (12 credits); 2) humanities, arts, and social science distributed electives (HASS, 12 credits, with 6 at 3000- or 4000-level); 3) a STEM component (15 credits); and 4) a co-curricular activities requirement (e.g., 3 units of physical education courses). Only the STEM component may be used to cover major requirements, but any portion of the structure may be used to fulfill minor requirements. Courses included on general education lists are vetted by the General Education Council, a University committee that has representation from each college and school, as well as representatives from the departments that offer the bulk of these courses. Proposals for course additions to general education lists must identify which of the six addressed USLGs aligns with the course content, provide a justification for inclusion in the program with the selected USLG tag, indicate what type of student work will be provided for assessment, and include a course syllabus. General education lists are updated each spring semester and become effective in the subsequent fall.

Assessment: The current structure of the General Education program at Michigan Tech was established through two major revisions implemented in fall 2013 (establishing the core) and in fall 2015 (establishing the program remainder). Assessment of the program is done by learning goal, using rubrics adapted from AAC&U's VALUE rubrics, and has ramped up from just the core courses (UN1015, UN1025, and the Core 4 and 8 Lists) in spring 2014, through the addition of the HASS lists in spring 2015, to inclusion of STEM lists with the pilot in spring 2016. Assessment is administered by University goal committees—one for each of the six USLGs that the program addresses—that report to the University Assessment Council and the General Education Council. Each fall and spring semester, student works are collected from general education courses. In the late spring, these artifacts are separated by goal and evaluated by teams of faculty that include goal committee members and faculty who teach the goal courses. Results are aggregated by upper and lower division courses and compiled in a goal committee report that offers reflections on the data as well as on the assessment process and provides recommendations to the two councils. Each goal committee then sends a summary letter of assessment observations and recommendations to the faculty teaching the goal courses. Overall, the General Education program is expected to bring all students to a developing achievement level (level 2 in the rubrics) for the six USLGs it addresses, and degree programs are expected to bring their students to a proficient level (level 3).

Additional LEAP Efforts: All undergraduate degree programs at Michigan Tech use rubrics adapted from AAC&U's VALUE rubrics to assess achievement in the eight USLGs (the six mentioned above that are addressed by General Education, plus Disciplinary Knowledge, and Technology).