

Goals and Objectives for General Education at Ramapo College

Report to Faculty Assembly and Provost

By the Academic Review Committee

April 4th, 2007

Relevant Background Statements:

Middle States Goals for General Education:

The institution's curricula are designed so that students acquire and demonstrate college-level proficiency in general education and essential skills, including oral and written communication, scientific and quantitative reasoning, critical analysis and reasoning, technological competency, and information literacy.

Pillars of the Ramapo College as listed in the Mission Statement:

Organized into thematic learning communities, Ramapo College provides academic excellence through its interdisciplinary curriculum, international education, intercultural understanding, and experiential learning opportunities.

Vision Statement

Students graduating from Ramapo College will be intellectually grounded in liberal studies, integrating in-depth knowledge with a commitment to the social and cultural skills and values necessary to be productive citizens in a global community and to engage in life-long learning. They will be well versed in the various methods of inquiry involved in the acquisition, construction and contextualization of knowledge.

Goals and Objectives:

Based on the above, the goals and defining objectives of the General Education Program at Ramapo College include college-level proficiency in the following:

INTELLECTUAL SKILLS

1. Critical Analysis

- a. Comprehending texts (oral, written, visual or other mediums) including academic discourse
- b. Identifying, summarizing, appropriately reformulating, and analyzing the problem, question, or issue from a given text
Recognizing the influence of context and assumptions, and analyzing the textual strategies for creating multiple layers of meaning
- c. Assessing and analyzing appropriate theoretical arguments, data, and/or other evidence
- d. Developing and presenting one's own perspective, hypothesis, or position
- e. Integrating other perspectives and positions into an analysis

- f. Identifying and assessing conclusions, implications, and consequences
- 2. **Oral, Written, and Visual Communication**
 - a. Formulating a thesis
 - b. Establishing a voice appropriate to the topic and rhetorical situation
 - c. Using effective rhetorical or visual strategies to persuade, inform, and engage
 - d. Employing speaking, writing and/or visual processes such as planning, drafting, collaborating, organizing, composing, revising, and editing to create papers and presentations using proper syntax, grammar, and mechanics
 - e. Clarifying major aims, and arranging materials to support them.
 - f. Using technology as appropriate to support presentations
 - g. Understanding the basic elements of visual design, technique, and media
- 3. **Information Literacy**
[from the Association of College and Research Libraries]
 - a. Determining the nature and extent of the information needed
 - b. Accessing the needed information effectively and efficiently
 - c. Evaluating information and its sources critically and incorporating selected information into a knowledge base and value system
 - d. Using information effectively to accomplish a specific purpose
 - e. Understanding the economic, legal, and social issues surrounding the use of information, and accessing the information ethically and legally
- 4. **Technological Literacy**
 - a. Using a word processing program to produce a well-designed document
 - b. Creating an effective computer presentation including graphics
 - c. Using a spreadsheet to represent and analyze numerical data
 - d. Understanding the societal impact and ethical issues related to information and information technologies
 - e. Understanding the limitations and prospects for change in information technology

SOCIAL, GLOBAL, AND CULTURAL KNOWLEDGE

- 5. **Intercultural Analysis**
 - a. Recognizing the contributions and demands one culture places on other cultures
 - b. Reflecting on and comparing the cultural contexts in which people live

[NOTE: a and b are from the International Task Force. Additional goals and objectives will be forthcoming from Intercultural Task Force]
- 6. **Global Awareness**
[pending from International Task Force]
- 7. **Historical Literacy and Civic Engagement**
 - a. Understanding and applying historical methods

- b. Locating, contextualizing, and critically evaluating primary and secondary historical sources
Comprehending change and continuity in history

8. Analysis of Aesthetic Productions/Work

- a. Developing vocabulary, analyzing and critically interpreting significant primary texts and/or works of art (including but not limited to fine art, literature, music, theater, and film)
- b. Comparing art forms, modes of thought and expression, and processes across a range of historical periods and/or structures
- c. Analyzing ideological, social and political assumptions about art and culture
- d. Exploring major critical and theoretical discourses of aesthetic production

METHODS OF INQUIRY

9. Interdisciplinary Analysis

[pending from Interdisciplinary Task Force]

10. Experiential Learning

[pending from Experiential Task Force]

11. Scientific Reasoning

(pending review by TAS)

- a. Understanding scientific concepts and processes
- b. Describing, explaining, and predicting natural phenomena
- c. Critically reading articles about science in popular media
- d. Identifying scientific issues underlying national and local political decisions
- e. Expressing positions on global, national, and local issues that are scientifically and technologically informed
- f. Evaluating the validity of scientific information based on its source and the methods used to generate it
Evaluating the ethical issues surrounding the scientific enterprise
Communicating scientific information effectively

12. Mathematical Reasoning

(pending review by Math convening group)

- a. Using arithmetical, algebraic, geometric and statistical methods to solve problems
- b. Interpreting mathematical models such as formulas, graphs, tables, and schematics, and drawing inferences
- c. Representing mathematical information symbolically, visually, numerically, and verbally
- d. Recognizing and describing the limits of mathematical and statistical methods

13. Ethical and Moral Reasoning

- a. Identifying and analyzing real-world ethical problems or dilemmas

- b. Understanding diverse ethical frameworks
- c. Describing and analyzing the complexity and consequences of ethical choices

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These goals and objectives were written by the Academic Review Committee, which drew on diverse sources, including but not limited to:

California State University Monterey Bay
California State University Sacramento
Illinois Articulation Initiative Statewide
National Academy of Sciences
New Mexico Higher Education Department
State University of New York, Geneseo
University of Iowa
University of Maine, Farmington (UMF)
University of Maryland
Washington State University
Western Michigan University
Document on General Education by the Greater Expectations Group
International Education Task Force Report
North Central Regional Educational Laboratory document on Visual Literacy
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