The Essential Learning Outcomes

Beginning in school, and continuing at successively higher levels across their college studies, students should prepare for twenty-first-century challenges by gaining:

★ Knowledge of Human Cultures and the Physical and Natural World
  • Through study in the sciences and mathematics, social sciences, humanities, histories, languages, and the arts
  Focused by engagement with big questions, both contemporary and enduring

★ Intellectual and Practical Skills, including
  • Inquiry and analysis
  • Critical and creative thinking
  • Written and oral communication
  • Quantitative literacy
  • Information literacy
  • Teamwork and problem solving
  Practiced extensively, across the curriculum, in the context of progressively more challenging problems, projects, and standards for performance

★ Personal and Social Responsibility, including
  • Civic knowledge and engagement—local and global
  • Intercultural knowledge and competence
  • Ethical reasoning and action
  • Foundations and skills for lifelong learning
  Anchored through active involvement with diverse communities and real-world challenges

★ Integrative and Applied Learning, including
  • Synthesis and advanced accomplishment across general and specialized studies
  Demonstrated through the application of knowledge, skills, and responsibilities to new settings and complex problems

Note: This listing was developed through a multiyear dialogue with hundreds of colleges and universities about needed goals for student learning; analysis of a long series of recommendations and reports from the business community; and analysis of the accreditation requirements for engineering, business, nursing, and teacher education. The findings are documented in previous publications of the Association of American Colleges and Universities: College Learning for the New Global Century (2007) and The LEAP Vision for Learning (2011). For more information, see www.aacu.org/leap.
Degree Qualifications Profile Overview

*A template of proficiencies required for the award of college degrees at the associate, bachelor’s, and master’s levels

**Knowledge**
At each degree level, every college student should demonstrate proficiency in using both specialized knowledge from at least one field and broad, integrative knowledge from arts and sciences fields. **Both kinds of knowledge** should be pursued from first to final year, providing opportunities for **integration across fields and application to complex problems**—in the student’s area of emphasis, in out-of-school settings, and in civil society.

**BROAD AND INTEGRATIVE KNOWLEDGE**
Key areas include the sciences, social sciences, humanities, arts, and global, intercultural, and democratic learning.
In each area, students:
- Learn key concepts and methods of inquiry
- Examine significant debates and questions
- Make evidence-based arguments

In addition, at each degree level, students:
- Produce work that integrates concepts and methods from at least two fields

**SPECIALIZED KNOWLEDGE**
Students demonstrate depth of knowledge in a field and produce field-appropriate applications drawing on both major field and, at the BA level and beyond, other fields. Students learn
- Discipline and field-specific knowledge
- Purposes, methods, and limitations of field
- Applied skills in field
- Integrative skills and methods that draw from multiple fields and disciplines

**Intellectual Skills**
Students hone and integrate intellectual skills across the curriculum, applying those skills both to complex challenges within major fields and to broad, integrative problem-solving challenges in general education, and in civic, global, and applied learning. Skills include
- Analytic inquiry
- Use of information resources
- Engaging diverse perspectives
- Ethical reasoning
- Quantitative fluency
- Communication fluency

**Civic and Global Learning**
Students acquire knowledge required for responsible citizenship both from their formal studies (see knowledge and skills, above) and from community-based learning, and **demonstrate their ability to integrate both forms of learning in analyzing and addressing significant public problems and questions, both in civic and global contexts.** Civic learning may be demonstrated through research, collaborative projects and/or field-based assignments.

**Applied and Collaborative Learning**
Students demonstrate their ability to **integrate and apply** their learning (see knowledge and skills, above) in complex projects and assignments, including collaborative efforts, that may include research, projects, practicums, internships, work assignments, performances, and creative tasks.

*This chart summarizes Lumina Foundation’s Degree Qualifications Profile, first released in 2014. This edition is informed by feedback from faculty and leaders from hundreds of colleges, universities, and community colleges that worked with the “beta version” of the document, which was published in 2011. The full Degree Qualifications Profile is available for download at http://www.luminafoundation.org/publications/The_Degree_Qualifications_Profile.pdf.*