

General Education

All students seeking to complete an undergraduate degree at Nebraska Methodist College must complete a set of General Education courses entitled "The Educated Citizen Core Curriculum." These are requirements that are asked of all students, regardless of program. Additionally, there are program-specific General Education requirements identified within each professional program description.

Philosophy of General Education

General Education focuses on three questions:

- “The *knowledge* focus asks the question: What should people in an educated society know?
- The *skill* focus asks: What should people in an educated society be able to do?
- And the *character* focus asks: What should people in an educated society value and how then should they behave?”¹

Mission of General Education

General Education serves as scaffolding for students in the health professions to become educated and engaged citizens of the world.

Philosophy of the Educated Citizen

An educated citizen exhibits breadth of learning through the liberal arts and sciences traditions to explore, explain and express the diversity of human thought and experience.

The process of becoming an educated citizen requires three facets of development: to be a reflective individual, to be an effective communicator, and to be a change agent. The model below reflects the iterative nature of this process: as each facet is developed it informs the nature of the other facets.



¹ Fuhrmann, B.S., (1996). Philosophies and aims. In J. G. Gaff, J.L. Ratcliff and Associates, *Handbook of the undergraduate curriculum: A comprehensive guide to purposes, structures, practices and change* (86-99). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

² Participants in the Project on Strong Foundations for General Education (1994). *Strong foundations: Twelve principles for effective general education*. Washington, DC: Association of American Colleges.

Students will develop habits of inquiry through the humanities, natural and applied sciences, and social sciences and both transfer them to professional coursework and apply them to challenges in the future. The ability to access information in a variety of contexts, to test hypotheses, to assess the validity of sources, and to communicate findings in a manner that matches the particular situation are all essential skills. Students will engage with primary texts (i.e. speeches, essays, historical documents, music) to broaden their understanding of the body of knowledge that exists beyond textbooks.

General Education Distribution Areas

General Education courses are grouped into the following four distribution areas:

Communications: Communications is the study of the spoken word, written word, artifacts, gestures and symbols. Representative areas of study include English composition, language, speech and leadership.

Humanities: The humanities explore, explain and express human thought and experience through literature, philosophy and the arts. The humanities foster development of skills and habits of inquiry that support responsible citizenship in a global community. Representative areas of study include arts, history, creative writing, critical thinking, dance, drama, ethics, literature, music, philosophy, spirituality and religion.

Social Sciences: Social sciences study the fundamental principles governing the individual behavior and group interactions within human experience that have shaped the past and are shaping the future. Representative areas of study include anthropology, economics, gerontology, political science, psychology, sociology and social research and statistics.

Natural & Applied Sciences: The natural and applied sciences study the fundamental physical laws that are present in the natural universe. The natural and applied sciences rely on a systematic method of questioning, observing, experimenting and theorizing. The natural sciences include the operation of general laws concerning the physical world and its phenomena whereas the applied sciences reconcile practical ends with scientific laws. Representative areas of study include biological sciences, chemistry, mathematics, nutrition, physical sciences and physics.

Minimum Requirements for Core Curriculum in the General Education Distribution Areas for those who matriculate Fall 2006 or After

Baccalaureate Degree: 48 Credit Hours

COMMUNICATIONS: 9 credit hours that must include:

- CM 101 English Composition
- *CM 230 or Language and Culture in Healthcare
- *CM 245
- *CM 320 Healthcare Collaboration and Leadership

HUMANITIES: 15 credit hours that must include:

- +*HU 150 The World of Ideas: Critical Reasoning and Rhetoric
- HU 210 Introduction to Ethics
- HU 220 The World of Ideas: The Arts
- HU 255 The World of Ideas: Historical Perspectives
- HU 270 The World of Ideas: Human Connection

NATURAL & APPLIED SCIENCES: 9 credit hours determined by program

SOCIAL SCIENCES: 15 credit hours that must include:

- SS 215 Lifespan Psychology
- SS 235 The Sociology of Culture
- SS 360 Introduction to Statistics
- SS 370 Principles of Research

*SS 465 Capstone: The Educated Citizen

*Courses required to take at NMC - 12 credit hours

+ Students matriculating with a Bachelors degree or who took a 3-credit public speaking course and a 3-credit critical thinking course are given 2 credits for HU 150 and will take 1 credit HU 152 Introduction to Portfolio.

Associate Degree: 21 Credit Hours

COMMUNICATIONS: 6 credit hours that must include:

CM 101 English Composition
*CM 230 or Language and Culture in Healthcare
*CM 245

HUMANITIES: 6 credit hours that must include:

+ *HU 150 The World of Ideas: Critical Reasoning and Rhetoric
HU 2__ The World of Ideas: Elective

NATURAL & APPLIED SCIENCES: 3 credit hours determined by program

SOCIAL SCIENCES: 6 credit hours that must include:

SS 215 Lifespan Psychology
SS 235 The Sociology of Culture

*Courses required to take at NMC: 6 credit hours

+ Students matriculating with a Bachelors degree or who took a 3-credit public speaking course and a 3-credit critical thinking course are given 2 credits for HU 150 and will take 1 credit HU 152 Introduction to Portfolio.

Service Learning

Nebraska Methodist College holistically educates students by encouraging integrated teaching strategies.

Service-learning is a pedagogy that incorporates community service into academic coursework. As a teaching strategy, service-learning allows students to provide services that enhance understanding of course concepts and meet course objectives while simultaneously meeting community-identified needs.

Learning occurs in a twofold manner:

1. The service experience allows students to test skills and concepts they learn in the classroom.
2. Students derive insights from the community service that challenge, complement or relate in other ways to skills and concepts they encounter in the classroom.

Faculty members prepare students for their service-learning sites. They also facilitate students' critical analysis and reflection on the service in order that students deepen their commitment to civic responsibility, experience themselves as positive agents of social change and become culturally competent.

Service-learning is one of many teaching strategies used by faculty at Nebraska Methodist College to promote the education and development of students. Discussion and reflection are facilitated during service-learning activities to create a deeper understanding of the service-learning experience. Faculty and community members work together with students to ensure that the service-learning benefits both the students and the community.

Writing Across the Curriculum

The Writing Across the Curriculum (WAC) program offers instruction in writing within professional courses, through resources on the WAC Website, and by specialized tutoring. Students who are having difficulty in writing are encouraged to discuss problems with their instructors, who may refer students for additional tutoring.

Faculty incorporate writing as a learning tool in their professional courses. In these courses they also teach advanced writing skills and the documentation of research. Graduate students as well as students enrolled in nursing and in surgical technology use the APA documentation system, while students in all other allied health fields apply AMA documentation.

The WAC Website, which is linked under "Academic Skills Building" in the Student Services area of the College website, provides resources in grammar and usage, in research writing, and in documentation systems.

Faculty members can refer students with individual needs to a Writing Specialist in the General Education Department.

Student Portfolio Assessment

Initiated in 1998, the NMC portfolio is both an outcomes assessment measure and a documentation source for student personal, professional and academic development. Research indicates that we learn best when we are aware of how we learn. One goal of the NMC Portfolio is to develop students' skills of reflection and cognition. By exploring the significance of a particular experience, assignment, or interaction, students learn to be aware of the interconnections among topics and apply their learning to future situations.

Students who matriculated prior to fall 2006 document their attention to five Integrated Concepts: Communication, Critical Thinking, Cultural Competence, Humanities, and Writing. These five areas were identified by faculty and staff as areas essential for student learning, regardless of program. Students place written reflections on each concept in a portfolio binder.

Students who matriculate in fall 2006 or later maintain either an electronic portfolio or paper portfolio. This portfolio documents the outcomes related to the Educated Citizen Core Curriculum as well as student personal and academic development. The Educated Citizen includes three primary outcomes: the Reflective Individual, the Effective Communicator, and the Change Agent. The electronic portfolio will allow students to maintain a more interactive portfolio that can include audio/video clips and digital images, and be adapted and sent to various audiences, using a secure password.

Whether students maintain paper or electronic portfolios, they will update their portfolios annually with evidence of their learning. As students prepare to graduate, they develop oral presentations that summarize learning and synthesize the most significant experiences documented in the portfolio.

Every student is responsible for completion of a portfolio. Though the portfolio is the student's responsibility, faculty and staff members are available for support to the student. The successful completion of a portfolio and portfolio presentation is a graduation requirement for all associate and bachelor degree students.