

General Education at North Carolina A&T State University
Purpose and Guiding Principles
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Purpose

The purpose of the general education core curriculum at North Carolina A&T State University is to provide a framework for critical inquiry that serves as a foundation for continuing academic development and life-long learning. Through discovery, inquiry, analysis, and application, the core curriculum promotes:

- broad-based critical-thinking skills
- effective written and oral communication of ideas
- appreciation for diverse cultures
- commitment to ongoing civic engagement and social responsibility

The core curriculum derives its purpose from the University's goal to prepare students through interdisciplinary learning and discovery to assume leadership roles in a fast-changing global society. Through coursework and co-curricular experiences, the general education core curriculum develops in students an understanding of the interdisciplinary nature of knowledge, encourages cross-disciplinary dialogue, and promotes the development of intentional learners who take responsibility for their learning.

Guiding Principles

- The general education core curriculum serves as a bridge to advanced study within disciplinary majors, where the critical thinking skills developed during a student's first two years of coursework are further developed and enhanced. The core curriculum extends into the major with an emphasis on the continued development of effective critical thinking and communication skills, culminating in a senior-level capstone experience that highlights and reflects students' intellectual development within and across disciplines. While the core curriculum promotes foundation-level knowledge in a broad array of disciplines, it is important to note that it does not provide *all* the preparation needed for every major. Some majors will require additional coursework, field experiences, and collaborative learning skills to meet discipline-specific needs.
- The general education core curriculum provides a common foundation for building the knowledge and skills that are required in today's fast-changing society. Every graduate, regardless of his or her major, will possess a common set of attributes defined by the core curriculum's learning objectives.
- Students will be expected to demonstrate their achievement of these learning objectives and associated learning outcomes through ongoing assessment at both the course and program level. In addition, academic departments offering courses that fulfill general education core curriculum requirements will be required to regularly provide evidence that the courses are achieving the learning objectives that they were originally developed to achieve.

Learning Objectives for the University Studies Program

Knowledge Areas	Learning Objectives <i>Throughout the general education core curriculum students should continually demonstrate the ability to:</i>
Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Effectively use information technology to find, interpret, evaluate, and use information discerningly.• Effectively communicate in diverse settings and groups using written, oral, and visual means.• Effectively employ critical thinking skills in written and oral communication.• Effectively relate ideas and concepts, as well as modes of inquiry, across disciplines.
Analytical Reasoning	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Use analytical thinking skills to evaluate information critically.• Apply multiple modes of inquiry, including quantitative and qualitative analysis, to formulate, describe, evaluate, and solve problems.
Application of Scientific Method	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Apply scientific reasoning skills to model natural, physical, social, and aesthetic phenomena using multiple modes of inquiry.• Use a wide range of disparate information and knowledge to draw inferences, test hypotheses, and make decisions.
Multicultural Relations Within a Global Society	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Understand African/African-American culture and traditions, including political, economic, and social challenges affecting people of African descent.• Interact effectively with people from diverse cultures.• Understand and appreciate the diversity and interrelationship of cultures locally, regionally, nationally, and internationally.
Historical and Social Processes in a Changing World	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Understand the role of social, political, and economic institutions and processes in the development of societies and the factors that lead to dynamic change in societies over time.

Artistic and
Literary
Understanding

- Understand the role of literature, music, and the fine arts in describing, defining, and celebrating the human condition in diverse world cultures.

Ethics and Social
Responsibility

- Understand and apply ethical reasoning principles to resolve moral, social, and professional issues.
- Understand the role that markets, governments and other social institutions can play in reducing social and economic inequality.

Health,
Lifestyles, and
Behavior

- Understand and promote principles of wellness that include nutrition, exercise, avoidance of mind-altering chemicals, development of healthy relationships, and personal growth.
 - Recognize behaviors that place individuals, families and communities at risk.
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Developmental Model of the University Studies Program

The model is based on a progressive development of knowledge and skills in four major goals over four years. The four major goals are related to: Critical Thinking, Communication Skills, Social Responsibility/ Civic Engagement/Ethics, and Diversity/World Cultures. The current learning objectives are connected to these four goals. For each goal, there are three “levels” of learning: Foundation/Discovery, Analysis/Problem Solving and Integrative. For each Goal-Level combination, a set of measurable outcomes will be defined. As students progress from the Foundation/Discovery level to the Integrative Level, the learning outcomes will change from Knowledge and Comprehension to Synthesis and Evaluation (higher levels in Bloom’s taxonomy). The table below summarizes the elements of this model

Developmental Level	IV. Integrative (Capstone Experience)	Incorporating Multiple Knowledge Areas / Integrating General Education Learning Outcomes			
	III. Knowledge Deepening	Work in the Major Departmental Learning Outcomes Integrating General Education Learning Outcomes			
	II. Analysis / Problem- Solving	Learning Outcomes	Learning Outcomes	Learning Outcomes	Learning Outcomes
	I. Foundation Inquiry/ Discovery	Learning Outcomes	Learning Outcomes	Learning Outcomes	Learning Outcomes
	Critical Thinking	Communication Skills	Social Responsibility, Civic Engagement and Ethics	Diversity & World Cultures	
	Knowledge Areas				