

Dominican University

University-wide Student Learning Goals

Preface

Assessing student learning is the process of collecting information in order to ascertain the extent to which students are achieving the learning goals set forth by the institution. Assessment takes place at different levels throughout the institution: the course, the program, the college or school, and the university as a whole. Each level of assessment tells the corresponding academic unit whether the educational experiences it provides to its students are producing the desired result and ideally informs the academic unit as to how student learning can be improved.

This document provides a set of learning goals at the university level. These goals are meant to convey a shared vision as to what should be expected of all students who successfully complete a Dominican education.

These eight goals were developed by establishing commonalities among existing student learning goals from across the college and the professional and graduate schools. They were developed with the University's mission in mind so that courses, programs, and schools that align their curricula with these goals will effectively also align their curricula with the University's mission. An additional benefit of having university-wide student learning goals is that it fosters communication and collaboration amongst different academic bodies regarding student learning.

The following learning goals are not intended to place limits on what is taught nor should it be expected that every program will address each goal equally.

The Assessment Committee expects that these goals will be systematically and formally assessed across the university. Every three years the Assessment Committee reports on assessment activities across the university. As part of this report, the Assessment Committee will solicit from the college and the professional and graduate schools reports of assessment of these student learning goals.

UNIVERSITY-WIDE STUDENT LEARNING GOALS

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Mission Statement

As a Sinsinawa Dominican-sponsored institution, Dominican University prepares students to pursue truth, to give compassionate service and to participate in the creation of a more just and humane world.

Goal Statements

1. Knowledge: Depth and Breadth

Students will develop a significant level of mastery within a major field of study and develop an appropriate degree of literacy in other disciplines.

Operational definition: “significant level of mastery” is defined as possessing a requisite set of content knowledge, an understanding of the key concepts and principles, and the requisite skill set (e.g., psycho-motor, intellectual, etc.) commonly associated with the discipline. “Literacy” is defined as having some basic knowledge and skills so as to be functional within a particular area (e.g., scientific literacy, computer literacy, information literacy, etc.).

2. Critical Thinking

Students will develop the necessary skills to think critically.

Operational definition: “to think critically” is defined as the intellectual process of analyzing, applying, synthesizing and/or evaluating information collected and/or generated through observation, experience, reflection, reasoning, or communication so as to reach an answer, make a prediction, or draw a conclusion.

3. Communication

Students will be able to communicate effectively.

Operational definition: “communicate effectively” is defined as the ability to convey meaning (either verbally or in writing) to a particular audience.

4. Global Citizenship*

Students will develop as global citizens.

Operational definition: “develop as global citizens” means that students will demonstrate the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and actions associated with being a Globally Positioned Student. This includes, but is not limited to, the development of the cultural competencies necessary for engaging the multiplicity of human perspectives and differences with authentic empathy.

See Appendix A for fuller descriptions of the terms: knowledge, skills, attitudes, and actions.

* Denotes goals that are academic priorities

5. Civic Engagement/Social Responsibility*

Students will demonstrate socially responsible behavior and civic engagement.

Operational definition: “social responsibility” and “civic engagement” together reflect acting and/or participating in events that address issues of public concern, so as to benefit society at large. A necessary aspect of acting in a socially responsible manner and/or participating in civic engagement involves demonstrating and adhering to moral and ethical principles, especially those associated with the Sinsinawa Dominican tradition.

6. Integrative/Interdisciplinary Inquiry*

Students will have the knowledge of and the ability to conduct integrative/interdisciplinary inquiry.

Operational definition: “integrative/interdisciplinary inquiry” is defined as the process of combining information, experiences, data, techniques, tools, perspectives, concepts, and/or theories from across different contexts.

7. Research and Scholarship*

Student will have the knowledge base and skill set necessary for conducting research and/or scholarship in a particular area of study.

Operational definition: “research and/or scholarship” is defined as the systematic implementation of intellectual inquiry to advance the knowledge base of a particular field of study and the dissemination of this knowledge through either publications or presentations.

8. Catholic-Dominican *ethos*

Students will have an understanding of the Catholic-Dominican *ethos*.

Operational definition: “understanding of the Catholic-Dominican *ethos*” refers to regarding the Catholic intellectual tradition as a conversation that affirms the compatibility of faith and reason, possessing the skills necessary for engaging in the Dominican tradition’s ongoing pursuit of truth, and having the capabilities for transformation of the world into a greater realization of the common good.

Sample measurable student learning outcomes for this goal are available in Appendix B.

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