COWBOY COMPASS OUTCOMES-BASED GENERAL EDUCATION DESIGNATIONS

(Revised 5/1/2024)

QUANTITATIVE THOUGHT & LOGICAL REASONING – (Q) - 3 credit hours

Purpose:
Courses with the *Quantitative Thought & Logical Reasoning* designation equip students with the knowledge and skills necessary to identify and apply mathematical concepts in real-world contexts. These courses foster critical thinking, logical reasoning, and problem solving. By honing these skills, students are better prepared to make informed decisions, navigate numerical data, and appreciate the importance and practicality of mathematics in their personal and professional lives.

Learning outcomes:
1. Analyze relationships between varying quantities and recognize patterns in information.
2. Apply quantitative, geometric, or logical models to analyze and solve problems.
3. Form inferences using logical systems and mathematical information and communicate them effectively.
4. Accurately interpret and translate between appropriate multiple representations (symbolic, visual, graphical, numerical, or verbal) of logical or mathematical information.
5. Relate abstract generalizations of concepts to concrete instances of these concepts and generalize multiple instances of a phenomenon into broad observations.

REASONING IN THE NATURAL SCIENCES – (N) - 6 credit hours, including one course with a designation of *Laboratory-Based Inquiry* – (L)

Purpose:
Courses with the *Reasoning in the Natural Sciences* designation provide essential insights into the fundamental principles underlying the physical and biological processes that govern our world. By acquiring a solid foundation in the natural sciences, students gain the ability to critically analyze the methods employed in scientific inquiry, comprehend the knowledge derived from these disciplines, and realize the interconnectedness of science and society.

Learning outcomes:
1. Demonstrate a fundamental understanding in a particular branch of the natural sciences.
2. Assess evidence, interpretations, outcomes, and solutions within the framework of natural sciences.
3. Identify and address broad, far-reaching problems through scientific techniques.
4. Describe how human involvement in physical and biological processes affects our world.

LABORATORY-BASED INQUIRY – (L) - One course needed in conjunction with the *Reasoning in the Natural Sciences* requirement.

Purpose:
Courses with the *Laboratory-Based Inquiry* designation emphasize processes of scientific investigation using real-world applications in the natural sciences. Students engage in concrete experiences meant to strengthen skills of observation, analysis, and interpretation. Interacting with content in this way allows students to connect theoretical constructs with practical experiences and develops an ability to evaluate the credibility of others' scientific findings.

Learning outcomes:

1. Apply the principles and techniques of scientific inquiry, e.g., formulating hypotheses, conducting experiments, making observations, analyzing data, and interpreting results.
2. Communicate procedures, results, and conclusions of one's scientific inquiry.
3. Evaluate the credibility of scientific information.

UNDERSTANDING HUMANITIES - HUMAN HERITAGE AND CULTURES – (H) - 6 credit hours

Purpose:
Courses with the *Understanding Humanities - Human Heritage and Cultures* designation emphasize the interpretation, analysis, and expression of ideas, values, and aesthetics that have played a significant role in shaping individuals and societies. These courses encourage students to analyze and interpret events and artifacts, while considering the diverse range of human ideas, cultural values, and aesthetics across various contexts. They often draw from disciplines such as history, philosophy, anthropology, archeology, cultural geography, modern and ancient languages, and cultural studies. In addition, they may pertain to music, art, drama, and dance courses that *are not* studio-based performance classes.

Learning outcomes:
1. Synthesize relationships of ideas, cultural values, or aesthetics to historic and contemporary cultures.
2. Assess how ideas, events, texts, artifacts or arts shape diverse individual identities.
3. Analyze and interpret events and artifacts, and consider the diverse range of human ideas, cultural values, and aesthetics across various contexts.
4. Enhance critical thinking, connect sources, and apply disciplinary concepts to generate coherent arguments related to the human experience.

EXPLORING SOCIETY AND HUMAN BEHAVIOR – (S) - 3 credit hours

Purpose:
Courses with the *Exploring Society and Human Behavior* designation allow students to explain society and human behavior in social and/or physical environments through use of theoretical and methodological constructs. These courses are based on empirical observation of human behavior rather than the study of aesthetics, ideas or cultural values. In these courses, students critically analyze generalizations about society, explore theoretical structures, and realize the role of empirical observation in social and behavioral structures.

Learning outcomes:
1. Interpret fundamental concepts of the social/behavioral sciences.
2. Critically analyze generalizations about society and explore theoretical structures.
3. Describe and/or practice empirical observation using quantitative and qualitative methods in the social and behavioral sciences.
4. Compare and contrast dimensions of economic, social, or cultural diversity.
5. Examine cultural, social, and historic dynamics that influence individuals and groups.
6. Apply social and behavioral science concepts to the practice of ethical and engaged citizenship to facilitate adaptation in a constantly changing society.

GLOBAL CULTURAL COMPETENCY – (G) - 3 Credit hours. Courses can be paired with another GE designation but may not be paired with the D designation.

Purpose:
Courses with the *Global Cultural Competency* designation are designed to cultivate critical thinking skills, cultural competency, and empathy necessary for navigating and appreciating diverse perspectives, identities, and experiences outside the United States. These courses equip students with the basic skills needed to successfully navigate a multicultural world, to reflect on historic legacies and present-day* dynamics, and provide a foundation for identifying and assessing potential avenues for positive change, growth, and development at a global level.

Learning outcomes:
1. Identify international dimensions of political, economic, ideological, and ethical perspectives and relate these to the complex systems of oppression, political ideology, globalization, or other similar dynamics.
2. Analyze the complex issues, problems, or obstacles that affect societies, economies, or the environment worldwide to determine the difficulties and possibilities that exist on a global scale.
3. Develop knowledge, skills, and attitudes that enable individuals to navigate cultural differences, communicate respectfully, and collaborate across cultural boundaries.
4. Apply disciplinary and/or interdisciplinary theories and knowledge to comprehend diverse global social, cultural, and political perspectives

5. Apply concepts of global cultural competency to the practice of ethical leadership and engaged citizenship.
6. Identify the ways in which global cultural competency may emerge in student's lives and careers through dimensions of personal responsibility and professional preparedness.
7. Engage in respectful communication with others, regardless of one's perspective.

* Present-day is defined as approximately the last 5 years. A minimum of 25% of course content must fit the present-day definition.

DIVERSITY – (D) - 3 Credit hours. Courses can be paired with another GE designation but may not be paired with the G designation.

Purpose:
Courses with the *Diversity* designation are designed to cultivate critical thinking skills, cultural competency, and empathy necessary for navigating and appreciating diverse perspectives, identities, and experiences in the United States. Students will explore the ways in which social identities shape our human experience and reflect on historic legacies and present-day* dynamics to develop the skills required to engage in respectful dialogue and collaboration with individuals from diverse backgrounds.

Learning Outcomes:
1. Reflect on identity through the examination of one or more underrepresented groups in the United States related to socially salient categories, which may include, but are not limited to, race, ethnicity, religion, social class, gender, age, disability, and sexual orientation.
2. Examine the ways that underrepresented groups define and express themselves and the context in which these developments occurred.
3. Critically analyze theories and systems of cultural, societal, political, or economic power.
4. Apply disciplinary and/or interdisciplinary theories and knowledge to comprehend diverse social, cultural, and political perspectives.
5. Apply concepts of diversity to the practice of ethical leadership and engaged citizenship.
6. Identify the ways in which issues of diversity may emerge in students' lives and careers through dimensions of personal responsibility and professional preparedness.
7. Engage in respectful communication with others, regardless of one's perspective.

* Present-day is defined as approximately the last 5 years. A minimum of 25% of course content must fit the present-day definition.

EXPRESSION THROUGH FINE ARTS AND LANGUAGES – (F) – OPTIONAL General Education courses to reach GE elective total.

Purpose:
Courses with the *Expression through Fine Arts and Languages* designation provide students with opportunities to apply experiential methods in order to analyze and understand the meaning and value of fine and language arts. These courses encourage students to create, participate in, and interact with content through visual or performing arts*, creative writing†, and foreign languages.

Learning outcomes:
1. Interpret and apply the techniques and theoretical approaches to communication, performance, and/or production in visual arts, performing arts, creative writing, and foreign languages.
2. Evaluate how individual and collective identities are expressed and shaped through the visual arts, performing arts, creative writing, or foreign languages.
3. Examine cultural, social, and historic dynamics that influence visual, performing, and linguistic arts.
4. Demonstrate knowledge and skill through artistic production, performance, and/or practical application.

*Studio or performance dimensions must be less than 50% of course content.

† Creative writing, a form of artistic expression, draws on the imagination to convey meaning through the use of imagery, narrative, and drama. This is in contrast to analytic or pragmatic forms of writing. This genre includes poetry, fiction (novels, short stories), scripts, screenplays, and creative non-fiction.