Educational Goals for UN 1001 Perspectives on Inquiry

“Perspectives” is a freshman seminar designed to emphasize critical thinking, discussion, and writing. Each section of this writing-intensive course is built around a rich, central intellectual question that is explored from multiple disciplinary points of view. Following are the central goals for all sections of the course. The Common Core for Perspectives identifies the pedagogical practices that all faculty members follow in designing and teaching their sections of the course.

I. GOALS

A. Institutional Goals. Perspectives will:

Improve the retention of first-year students
Provide a universal course in small sections at modest cost
Smooth the transition from high school to college
Build a participatory student culture to strengthen active learning
Provide students with a rich opportunity to interact with faculty

B. Student Goals

1. Intellectual habits and values. Students in Perspectives will:

Develop the ability to thoughtfully consider others’ ideas and positions
Demonstrate intellectual curiosity, which contributes to lifelong learning
Develop tolerance for ambiguity and uncertainty
Show appreciation for, and willingness to engage, complex questions
Understand expectations of academic integrity

2. Intellectual skills. Students in Perspectives will:

Write and speak precisely and persuasively
Read critically and thoughtfully
Choose reputable sources to support arguments
Learn to use appropriate citation practices

3. Content knowledge and critical thinking. Because individual sections of the course focus on different topical areas, content knowledge expectations in each section are articulated and measured by individual instructors. Students in Perspectives will:

Demonstrate the ability to engage issues from diverse disciplinary and cultural perspectives
Learn to use reason, evidence, and logical inquiry to support written and oral arguments
II. THE COMMON CORE FOR PERSPECTIVES

To assist in the achievement of these goals and to ensure consistency across sections of the course, the General Education Council has established the following set of pedagogical principles and practices. All sections of Perspectives will:

1. Utilize readings that reflect multi-disciplinary perspectives on the central intellectual question(s).

2. Will be writing-intensive, meaning that they will require at least 40 pages of writing, at least 20 pages of which will be formal/graded writing (for a larger audience).

   a. The formal writing will include some assignment(s) requiring proper attribution of reputable sources. All sections will include offer practice in the process of composing and revising, incorporating a variety of strategies, such as teacher-student conferences, multiple drafts, peer response groups, and peer editing.

   b. Instructors will require informal writing assignments intended to help students learn and/or shape their understanding of assigned material and to assist them in preparing formal writing assignments. Journals, student learning logs, free-writes, and informal response papers are a few typical ways to address this requirement.

3. Require students to work regularly in groups for the purposes of discussing reading and writing assignments, participating in daily class discussion, working on upcoming presentations, or critiquing and editing drafts of peers.
Educational Goals for UN 1002 World Cultures

“World Cultures” is an interdisciplinary examination of human diversity and cultural change around the globe, utilizing the methods and perspectives of the social sciences, humanities and arts. This large-format, lecture-based course integrates “lab” components that provide students with an understanding of how cultures express themselves through film and live performance. Following are the central goals for all sections of the course. The Common Core for World Cultures identifies approaches and pedagogical practices that all faculty members follow in designing and teaching their sections of the course.

I. GOALS

A. Institutional Goals. World Cultures will:

Provide a shared experience for lower division students
Stimulate new avenues for student learning through the integration of art, music, performance, lecture, film, and readings
Provide a multidisciplinary experience of world human complexity from the perspectives of anthropology, geography, history, literature and the arts

B. Student Goals

1. Intellectual habits and values. Students in World Cultures will:

Develop awareness and appreciation of cultural contrasts
Develop the capacity to critically examine their own cultural traditions
Become more tolerant of ambiguity and uncertainty
Become more sensitive to the complexity of the human experience

2. Intellectual skills. Students in World Cultures will:

Observe, experience, read about and analyze cultural phenomena critically and thoughtfully
Write reflectively and persuasively about cultural experiences

3. Content knowledge and critical thinking. Students in World Cultures will:

Explore cultures and civilizations through time and space
Become familiar with the causes and consequences of globalization
Think reflectively about cultures and differences in the ways cultures express themselves
II. THE COMMON CORE FOR WORLD CULTURES

Individual sections of World Cultures have a common set of expectations, although disciplinary approaches to realizing these goals may differ, depending on the background of the individual instructors. All sections will:

1. Emphasize cultural complexity, diversity and global outlook and orientation. Instructors will develop in students an increased sensitivity to the complexity of the human condition, an awareness and appreciation of cultural difference, and an understanding of the causes and impacts of globalization.

2. Emphasize cultural expression through a laboratory requirement utilizing a common set of live performances and films, including professional performances in the Rozsa Center and student and community performances under the auspices of the Department of Visual and Performing Arts. Common films are selected by the instructors and should be products of the cultural regions represented.

3. Utilize a common study guide that includes a selection of common readings and guides to the performances and common films.

4. Encourage students to utilize study teams to reinforce and support classroom learning.

5. Emphasize written assignments, typically associated with the laboratory experiences, with a target production of 3000-4000 words of out-of-class writing during the semester. Graders will strive to assist students in clearly and precisely explaining and supporting their claims.
Educational Goals for UN 2001 Composition

“Composition: Written, Oral, and Visual” is a sophomore-level writing course. Students learn to apply rhetorical principles to compose effective, supported arguments in written, oral, and visual modes. Following are the central goals for all sections of UN2001. The Common Core for UN2001 identifies the pedagogical practices that all faculty members follow in designing and teaching their sections of the course.

I. GOALS

A. Institutional Goals. Composition will:

Utilize programmatic expertise in communications
Provide a universal course in small sections at modest cost
Build a participatory student culture to strengthen active learning

B. Student Goals

1. Intellectual habits and values. Students in Composition will:

Write precisely crafted and persuasive arguments
Analyze audience, purpose, and context; adjust communication strategies and modes based on assessment of individual and situational differences
Develop and hone research skills; demonstrate ability to choose reputable sources to support written, oral, and visual arguments
Seek out feedback to aid in revising and editing written, oral, and visual arguments

2. Intellectual skills. Students in Composition will:

Write and speak precisely and persuasively
Demonstrate ability to use appropriate citation practices with academic integrity
Present findings in a public forum
Develop proofreading and editing skills to improve written, oral, and visual arguments

3. Content knowledge and critical thinking. Students in Composition will:

Demonstrate ability to evaluate evidence
Use evidence, logical inquiry, and reasoning to support arguments and draw conclusions
Demonstrate ability to analyze progressively complex arguments and to explain argumentation strategies employed
Strengthen the ability to thoughtfully consider others’ ideas and positions
Develop rhetorical approaches to engaging complex questions
Understand expectations of academic integrity
II. THE COMMON CORE FOR COMPOSITION

To achieve these goals and to ensure consistency across sections of the course, a common set of pedagogical principles and practices has been established. All sections of Composition will:

1. Be structured around a linked series of major writing assignments (typically three) culminating in a substantial research-based essay that is persuasive in intent and grounded in rhetorical analysis and critical reasoning.

2. Offer both instruction and practice in the process of composing, with particular emphasis on revising (teacher-student conferences, multiple drafts, peer response groups, peer editing). Mechanical correctness and proofreading should generally be presented as terminal stages in the composing process.

3. Require some writing primarily intended to help students learn and/or shape their formal writing assignments and their required readings. Journals, free-writes, and informal response papers are a few ways to address this requirement.

4. Require a variety of visual and oral strategies in support of the writing and revising that constitutes the spine of the course.

5. Offer instruction in the importance and methods of audience analysis. All major assignments should stipulate a target audience and require students to demonstrate their ability to adjust their communication to the needs of that target audience.

6. Require students to work regularly in groups for the purposes of discussing reading and writing assignments or working on presentations or as part of peer critique and editing. Such group work recognizes the social and collaborative nature of much of how and what we learn.

7. Require a major group presentation. One possibility is a capstone presentation that requires students within a group to use written, oral, and visual strategies to demonstrate the common ground their individual essays share.

8. Require students to read widely in the texts or an approved reader as part of 1) ongoing learning in the class about written, visual, and oral modes of communication, and 2) the research process for major assignments. Class and/or group discussion of selected readings should be a regular feature of in-class dialogue.

9. Require students to keep a portfolio of their work structured around an established set of guidelines, for purposes of assessment. At the end of the semester portfolios will be collected; a random sample of these portfolios will be selected to assess the course. Instructors may use required portfolios or more detailed portfolios in determining student grades.
Educational Goals for UN 2002 Institutions

Institutions is an interdisciplinary course that grounds students in fundamental questions of how humans organize themselves for collective action through institutions—economic institutions, political/governmental institutions, and social institutions, including family, education, and religion. Following are the central goals of the course. The Common Core for Institutions identifies the pedagogical practices that all faculty follow in designing and teaching their sections of the course.

I. GOALS

A. Institutional Goals. Institutions will:

Serve as one of the four core, required general education courses

B. Student Goals

1. Intellectual habits and values. Students in Institutions will:

Show appreciation for, and willingness to engage, complex questions
Develop the capacity to critically examine their institutional structures and cultural traditions
Demonstrate intellectual curiosity, which contributes to lifelong learning

2. Intellectual skills. Students in Institutions will:

Write precisely and persuasively about institutionally patterned social experiences
Examine institutionalized patterns of human behavior critically and thoughtfully
Use reputable sources to support arguments
Learn to use appropriate citation practices

3. Content knowledge and critical thinking. Students in Institutions will demonstrate an understanding of a set of core questions:

What are institutions and how do societies organize themselves?
What are the functions of governments and of markets?
What are the differences among the major political-economic systems of fascism, capitalism, socialism, and communism?
How do the roles of individuals and communities conflict?
How are consumption, production, and allocation of resources related?
What is the role in economic systems of capital, property, money, corporations?
How is inequality institutionalized in societies?
What is the role in the US government of separation of powers, interest groups, conflict and compromise?
What is the role of religion and education as institutions and formal organizations and in supporting social stability and change?
How are gender, age, marriage, and family expressed in American society?
II. THE COMMON CORE FOR INSTITUTIONS

To assist in the achievement of these outcomes and to ensure consistency across sections of the course, the Council has established the following set of principles and practices. Although Institutions is a single course, course content is flexible to account for differences in faculty expertise and interest. All sections of Institutions:

1. Will enroll approximately 70-80 students per section, although the Department of Social Sciences and the School of Business and Economics will have flexibility to increase or reduce section size.

2. Will utilize a common set of readings that address social, economic, and political processes and institutions through the core content questions above.

3. Will emphasize interdisciplinary perspectives on the nature and characteristics of institutions.