

GER outcomes in your syllabus

General Education Requirements (GER) for baccalaureate degrees describe required courses that students must complete in order to achieve a bachelor's degree. Here at UAF, GERs provide a common set of learning experiences for students and have outcomes that encapsulate the broad educational goals of a liberal arts college. Ideally, courses that fulfill the GER align their course outcomes with the broad GER outcomes. If you're developing a new GER course, aligning your course outcomes with GER outcomes will go a long way in streamlining the course approval process.

Engaging GER outcomes in the course development process presents opportunities for creating activities/assessments that help students gain a broad base of knowledge of the natural, physical and civic world around them, develop skills to grow that knowledge, and become better critical thinkers capable of formulating ideas and communicating them to others.



If you're not familiar with the [outcomes for GER courses here at UAF](#), they are as follows:

1. Build knowledge of human institutions, sociocultural processes, and the physical and natural world through the study of the natural and social sciences, technologies, mathematics, humanities, histories, languages and the arts.
2. Develop intellectual and practical skills across the curriculum, including inquiry and analysis, critical and creative thinking, problem solving, written and oral communication, information literacy, technological competence, and collaborative learning.
3. Acquire tools for effective civic engagement in local through global contexts, including ethical reasoning,

intercultural competence, and knowledge of Alaska and Alaska issues.

3. Integrate and apply learning, including synthesis and advanced accomplishment across general and specialized studies, adapting them to new settings, questions and responsibilities, and forming a foundation for lifelong learning.

To summarize the above learning outcomes succinctly, consider the following as crib notes:

- 1 Build (Add to) Knowledge/Input
- 2 Develop (Evaluate) Skills/Processing
- 3 Engage/Action, Doing
- 4 Transfer/Integrative Learning

GER outcomes are useful tools for developing classroom activities for courses that fulfill GER outcomes. Aligning your syllabus with broader institutional outcomes clearly articulates how the course reaches GER outcomes within your discipline. Practically, achievement of these outcomes can be assessed using [Bloom's taxonomy](#), or your favorite taxonomy guide, to determine lower- to higher-order skills demonstrated by students.

If you're interested in a continuing conversation regarding GER outcomes, or are interested in piloting a GER assessment tool for your course, contact [Sarah Stanley, PhD](#), Associate Professor of English and Composition Director and [Zoe Jones, PhD](#), Assistant Professor of Art History.

Further Reading

Jones, B. M., & Wehlburg, C. M. (2014). [Learning Outcomes Assessment Misunderstood: Glass Half-Empty or Half-Full](#). *Journal Of The National Collegiate Honors Council*, 15(2), 15-23.

Anderson, L.W. (Ed.), Krathwohl, D.R. (Ed.), Airasian, P.W., Cruikshank, K.A., Mayer, R.E., Pintrich, P.R., Raths, J., & Wittrock, M.C. (2001). *A taxonomy for learning, teaching, and assessing: A revision of Bloom's Taxonomy of Educational Objectives (Complete edition)*. New York: Longman.

[Bloom's Taxonomy: Teacher Planning Kit](#) (PDF)

[More on learning taxonomies](#) on iTeachU