

UCC-21: WISER Guidelines

Tier 2 courses must carry at least one WISER designation. Any other university courses, with the exception of those in the foundation, may be approved as WISER courses. All WISER courses must have category-specific learning objectives and associated assessments.

For a course to be given a ‘W’ designation, course descriptions must:

1. Clearly show the way in which the proposed course is writing intensive. The goal of the writing requirement in WISER is that students develop sophistication in disciplinary-based writing.
2. A ‘W’ course is expected to have regular writing assignments that provide feedback enabling students to improve their writing skills.

For a course to be given an ‘I’ designation, course descriptions must:

1. Clearly show the way in which the proposed course enhances student understanding of international issues and contexts and the implications they have for people worldwide. The goal of the International Awareness requirement in WISER is that students develop sophistication in international issues and their pragmatic consequences.
2. An ‘I’ course is expected to have a major unit or continuous thread on international issues and awareness.

For a course to be given an ‘S’ designation, course descriptions must:

1. State whether the course will focus on service learning or on civic engagement, or both.
2. State the activities proposed for either service learning or civic engagement.
3. An ‘S’ course is expected to have a major unit or a continuous thread of service learning or civic engagement.

For a course to be given an ‘E’ designation, course descriptions must:

1. Clearly show how environmental awareness or environmental sustainability will be a substantial unit or a continuous thread of the course.
2. Clearly state how environmental awareness or environmental sustainability achieves some of the learning objectives of the course.

For a course to be given an ‘R’ designation, course descriptions must:

1. Clearly show the way in which diversity will be a substantial unit or a continuous thread of the course.
2. Clearly state how considerations of diversity among peoples and cultures achieve some of the learning objectives of the course.

Examples of Possible Learning Objectives for Environmental Awareness and Environmental Sustainability

Below is a list of possible learning objectives for an 'E' course. This is not an exhaustive list, nor must a course include all—or even most—of the topics below to carry an 'E' designation. Any of the topics below could be developed into a substantial part of an 'E' course.

Students can:

1. Explain fundamental environmental concepts using appropriate vocabulary.
2. Articulate and apply the scientific method and its role in scientific inquiry concerning the environment.
3. Explain the co-evolution of humans with their environment and the limitations of human interactions with it.
4. Analyze environmental problems in a structured way and develop strategies for solutions that indicate how scientific principles interact with ethical, political and/or economic principles.
5. Describe the state of the environment in relation to the social structure and human health.
6. Analyze the complexities of phenomena that link economics, politics, culture, history, biology, geology, and physical processes.
7. Engage in dynamic, vigorous exchange across the traditional disciplinary boundaries within and between natural and social/human sciences.
8. Work with specific communities to facilitate self-conscious, reflective engagement with linked socio-environmental processes.

With thanks to the Council on the Environment for help with this list.

Examples of Learning Objectives for Courses in Respect for Diversity among Peoples and Cultures

In General, courses that teach respect for diversity use strategies that accommodate diverse teaching and learning styles as well as course materials that use diversity (race, ethnicity, culture, language, religion, gender, sexual orientation, physical disability) in examples, assignments and exams. Students are given opportunities for seeing other cultures in non-traditional ways such as from an insiders point of view, from a non-mainstream point of view or in contrast to the student's own perspective.

Below is a list of possible learning objectives for an 'R' course. This is not an exhaustive list, nor must a course include all—or even most—of the learning objectives below to carry an 'R' designation. Any of the learning objectives below could be used to develop an 'R' course.

Students can:

1. Identify, describe or explain multiple perspectives based on race, ethnicity, gender, social class, sexual orientation, culture, religion, age and(or) disability.
2. Identify or describe how women, people of color, people from various cultures and(or) religions, people of different sexual orientations, and(or) people with disabilities have contributed to the development of the discipline.
3. Identify how the discipline's research has been inclusive, non-inclusive, biased, non-biased, applicable, not applicable to women, people of color, people from various cultures and(or) religions, people of different sexual orientations, and(or) people with disabilities.
4. Identify the historical and cultural roots of biases that have existed in the disciplines throughout its development and into the present day and how that has affected activity and scholarship in the discipline and access to working in the discipline.
5. Describe the accomplishments of diverse groups as part of the course content.
6. Apply the epistemological standpoints of women, people of color, people from various cultures and(or) religions, people of different sexual orientation, and(or) people with disabilities.
7. Engage in and reflect on experiences with persons of differing race, ethnicity, gender, social class, religion, sexual orientation, abilities and disabilities.
8. Explain the interactions of groups that differ with regard to race, gender, ethnicity, social class, culture, religion, sexual orientation, age, or disability.

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