

To: Faculty Senate Executive Committee
From: University Curriculum Committee
Date: November 7, 2015
Re: Outcomes based on University mission statement

Senate Exec recently requested that UCC determine and draft 4-5 measurable outcomes based on Drake University's mission statement. UCC met on Friday, November 6 and had a lively conversation emphasizing two related questions: what do we want all Drake students to learn, and what do we want them to be able to do by the time they receive a diploma from our university?

The draft outcomes below are based on UCC's conversation. Each outcome includes a list of mission phrases directly linked to that outcome, and a series of bullet points explicating the outcome and discussing its measurability. **Please note that the outcomes are not arranged in order of importance.**

Drake's mission statement reads as follows:

"Drake's mission is to provide an exceptional learning environment that prepares students for meaningful personal lives, professional accomplishments, and responsible global citizenship. The Drake experience is distinguished by collaborative learning among students, faculty, and staff and by the integration of the liberal arts and sciences with professional preparation."

UCC's draft outcomes are as follows:

Drake students will have the ability to:

Communicate in a persuasive, engaging manner appropriate for their audience (links to "meaningful personal lives," "professional accomplishments," "responsible global citizenship," "collaborative learning," "integration of the liberal arts and sciences with professional preparation")

- Classes across the Drake Curriculum should hone students' writing and speaking skills through assignments and/or class discussion (student-centered learning). We can use existing rubrics to assess these skills.
- Much of what we learn about effective communication occurs outside the traditional classroom. Students should take part in undergraduate and graduate research, independent inquiry, internships, and international and experiential learning opportunities. We can gather statistics on how many students access these opportunities each academic year.
- In contemporary society, communication is multimodal, with text-based, visual, and blended components. We can gather data on students' multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary coursework.

Access, analyze, and produce knowledge synthesized across diverse fields of study (links to “meaningful personal lives,” “professional accomplishments,” “responsible global citizenship,” “collaborative learning,” “integration of the liberal arts and sciences with professional preparation”)

- Accessing knowledge entails information literacy. We can use the existing information literacy rubric to assess students’ ability to access credible and useful information for their coursework.
- Analyzing knowledge entails critical thinking. We can use the existing critical thinking rubric to assess this skill/sensibility in students.
- The phrase “diverse fields of study” indicates a hallmark of a liberal arts education: sustained encounters with fields other than the student’s major field of study. This well-rounded education is key to responsible global citizenship, and can be measured by examining the number and type of courses students take during their years at Drake.
- Students who “produce” knowledge can do so in a variety of ways: independent and/or supervised research projects, creative endeavors, and professional or community work, to name three key examples. We can gather data on the number of opportunities students have to engage in such activities.

Put knowledge into practice through experiential learning and civic engagement (links to “meaningful personal lives,” “professional accomplishments,” “responsible global citizenship,” “collaborative learning,” “integration of the liberal arts and sciences with professional preparation”)

- Drake’s mission explication draft states the university’s intention to deliver “international, experiential, service, research-centered, and integrative learning opportunities.” We can gather data on the number of students accessing such opportunities each academic year.
- This data might also be separated into categories: professional opportunities, service opportunities, research opportunities, international opportunities, and opportunities for public or civic engagement. Drake can determine which areas seem most robust and which could benefit from enhancement.
- Drake’s mission explication draft states, “we strive to integrate the capacity for profound self-understanding and cultural literacy into the professional competencies our curricular and co-curricular learning opportunities foster. Our students understand the relationship of their chosen professions to larger social, cultural, political, economic, scientific, philosophical, and moral questions.” We can devise a rubric related to global understanding; other schools have and use such assessment tools.

Understand the historical, cultural, economic, and scientific

forces that shape local, national, and global contexts and explain their own situation in these contexts (links to “meaningful personal lives,” “responsible global citizenship,” “integration of the liberal arts and sciences with professional preparation”)

- Classes across the Drake Curriculum should situate their subject matter and field(s) within historical and cultural contexts. An examination of course syllabi and assignments might give us a sense of how many courses do this kind of work.
- The phrase “historically, culturally, and in a scientific context” refers back to the notion of integrating “liberal arts and sciences” with “professional preparation.” Again, we can measure this outcome by examining the number and type of courses students take during their years at Drake.
- The phrase “local, national, and global citizens” denotes emphasis on U.S. identities and differences as well as global ones. As noted earlier, we can devise a rubric to assess global understanding, but we suggest paying equal attention to more local understanding of diversity in American culture, including here in Des Moines. There are rubrics available for assessing students “cultural competencies,” including their awareness of their own subject positions within a wider community.
- Drake states its intention to deliver “international, experiential, service, research-centered, and integrative learning opportunities.” We can gather data on the number of students accessing such opportunities each academic year, with—in this case—particular emphasis on international, experiential, and service opportunities related to good citizenship.

Develop and demonstrate habits of self-reflection, self-assessment, and ethical reasoning (links to “meaningful personal lives,” “professional accomplishments,” “responsible global citizenship,” “collaborative learning,” “integration of the liberal arts and sciences with professional preparation”)

- Classes across the Drake Curriculum should give students opportunities to reflect upon their own coursework and learning. An examination of course syllabi and assignments might give us a sense of how many courses actually do this kind of work.
- We feel that Drake students should have solid grounding in personal and professional ethics. An examination of course syllabi and assignments might give us a sense of the ways in which our courses engage with ethical questions.
- Drake’s mission explication draft describes “educating the whole student, through complementary curricular and co-curricular activities.” Our recommendations so far have primarily focused on educational opportunities inside and outside the classroom, but “co-curricular” and “campus life” opportunities can also be quantified and assessed.

- Drake has developed a reputation for students finding meaningful post-graduation work relevant to their fields of study. Through surveys and other strategies, we can gather data on our alumni—what they are doing after graduating, what they feel their greatest achievements are, and what challenges they face.