The Essential Learning Outcomes

Beginning in school, and continuing at successively higher levels across their college studies, students should prepare for twenty-first-century challenges by gaining:

Knowledge of Human Cultures and the Physical and Natural World

- Through study in the sciences and mathematics, social sciences, humanities, histories, languages, and the arts

_Focused by engagement with big questions, both contemporary and enduring_

Intellectual and Practical Skills, including

- Inquiry and analysis
- Critical and creative thinking
- Written and oral communication
- Quantitative literacy
- Information literacy
- Teamwork and problem solving

_Practiced extensively, across the curriculum, in the context of progressively more challenging problems, projects, and standards for performance_

Personal and Social Responsibility, including

- Civic knowledge and engagement—local and global
- Intercultural knowledge and competence
- Ethical reasoning and action
- Foundations and skills for lifelong learning

_Anchored through active involvement with diverse communities and real-world challenges_

Integrative Learning, including

- Synthesis and advanced accomplishment across general and specialized studies

_Demonstrated through the application of knowledge, skills, and responsibilities to new settings and complex problems_

Note: This listing was developed through a multiyear dialogue with hundreds of colleges and universities about needed goals for student learning; analysis of a long series of recommendations and reports from the business community; and analysis of the accreditation requirements for engineering, business, nursing, and teacher education. The findings are documented in previous publications of the Association of American Colleges and Universities: _Greater Expectations: A New Vision for Learning as a Nation Goes to College_ (2002), _Taking Responsibility for the Quality of the Baccalaureate Degree_ (2004), and _Liberal Education Outcomes: A Preliminary Report on Achievement in College_ (2005). Liberal Education Outcomes is available online at www.aacu.org/leap.