

# GOALS FOR THE UNDERGRADUATE EXPERIENCE

Undergraduate education at the University of Michigan-Dearborn is based on the belief that the benefits of academic work are enhanced when classroom and intellectual rigor interact with community engagement and experiential learning. The University of Michigan-Dearborn is uniquely situated to address the complex challenges facing the metropolitan region by offering students rigorous academic offerings as well as the opportunity to apply that knowledge in real-world situations. Our goal is to graduate students who are able to apply theoretical and discipline-specific knowledge to discover creative solutions to problems and to successfully communicate those ideas both individually and as a part of a collaborative effort.

Undergraduate programs at UM-Dearborn provide students with the opportunity to develop particular skills and abilities; to think critically and creatively to solve problems; to cultivate an appreciation of aesthetic and ethical values; and to acquire both breadth of knowledge and the depth of understanding gained through the study of one or more academic disciplines. The UM-Dearborn faculty has a common commitment across units to provide students with foundational knowledge through content-specific courses, extra-curricular activities, and community-oriented experiences.

The goals for undergraduate student learning and experiences at UM-Dearborn are:

- Core Knowledge
- Critical Thinking
- Communication
- Collaboration
- Cultural Understanding
- Citizenship

## Goals

### 1. Core Knowledge

Undergraduate student learning goal #1, "Core Knowledge," acknowledges that, each discipline at the University of Michigan-Dearborn, requires students to gain knowledge of and experience with their chosen academic discipline. Although the content-area goals within each discipline will likely be unique, all degree programs share fundamental educational values that include:

- acquiring rigorous, discipline-specific inquiry skills.
- learning to apply theories to and construct models for addressing real-world problems.
- discussing and producing intellectual work using discipline-specific conventions for writing, research and communicating.

### 2. Critical and Creative Thinking

Undergraduate student learning goal #2, "Critical and Creative Thinking," acknowledges the students' need to gain experience in problem solving, and to engage in analysis, synthesis and evaluation in creative ways using an ethical framework. Development of such habits of mind will be demonstrated by:

- the ability to seek information and use inquiry to systematically explore situations, collect and analyze evidence, and make informed evaluations.
- the synthesis of knowledge within and across courses and programs and the integration of theory and practice.
- the ability to use qualitative and quantitative reasoning to develop a clear understanding of the problem being studied.
- the generation of creative solutions to problems through original, imaginative, innovative, or artistic effort.
- the ability to use ethical reasoning to generate meaningful solutions to problems.

### 3. Communication

Undergraduate student learning goal #3, "Communication," recognizes that there are a wide variety of modes of communication, including written and oral communication that are continually being shaped and expanded through rapid changes in technology. Student mastery of these myriad ways of communicating ideas and intellectual products will be demonstrated through the development of:

- the ability to communicate clearly and effectively to an identified audience both in writing and orally.
- the creation of communication that demonstrates content knowledge, deep reflection, creativity and critical thinking.
- the appropriate use of technology in maximizing the clarity, impact and accessibility of student ideas.

### 4. Collaboration

Undergraduate student learning goal #4, "Collaboration," acknowledges that collaborating with peers, faculty and community members is an important part of the learning process in all disciplines. This element in the University's educational plan for students will be promoted by providing students the opportunity to:

- work actively and effectively as part of a team to answer questions and solve problems.
- develop the ability to critically and effectively evaluate the collaborative products and processes.
- grapple effectively with differences and diversity and resolve conflict that occurs in collaborative efforts.

### 5. Cultural Understanding

Undergraduate student learning goal #5 "Cultural Understanding," acknowledges that appreciating global and cultural diversity within historical, artistic, and societal contexts is critical to individual and societal success in both professional and personal areas of life. Student achievement in this realm will be gained through:

- reflecting on experiences with diversity to demonstrate knowledge and sensitivity.
- demonstrating awareness of how diversity emerges within and across cultures.
- developing the ability to collaborate in a global setting through awareness of language and cultural differences.

### 6. Citizenship

Undergraduate student learning goal #6, "Citizenship," recognizes that engagement occurs in many ways for students, and manifests itself in different ways for each academic program and discipline. Active meaningful student involvement in course, community and societal affairs will also encourage student lifelong learning by providing the opportunity to use their skills, abilities and knowledge in a variety of roles and environments. Acquisition of these skills will be promoted through:

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- engagement in case-study, scenario analyses and problem solving activities.
- participation in curricular and co-curricular work integral to the metropolitan mission of UM-Dearborn.
- exposure to the diversity, strengths and challenges of the metropolitan community.
- experience in engaging in activities that emphasize the habits of lifelong learning.