

1.0 Integrative Capstone Curriculum Model and Assessment Criteria

1.1 Definition of UAA Integrative Capstone

The central goal of the Integrative Capstone category is to require students to synthesize across GER domains. Integrative Capstone courses give students the opportunity to develop and apply the collaborative working skills, critical thinking skills, and intensive written and oral communication skills that lead to an understanding of the fundamental interrelations among disciplinary skills and perspectives, as well as the distinctive viewpoints of the disciplines.

1.2 Purpose of Integrative Capstone

The purpose of the Integrated Capstone is to enrich the academic experience of students by: (1) enabling UAA students to become well-rounded, liberally educated people; (2) stimulating curricular innovation; (3) integrating GER Preamble Student Outcomes with GER content areas; and (4) facilitating general education assessment.

1.3 Integrative Capstone Course Description

The GER experience concludes with the Integrative Capstone (Tier 3), which includes courses from across the university that involve the interrelationships and synergy of GER Basic-College Level skills (Tier 1) and Disciplinary Areas (Tier 2). Courses in this category should focus on practice, study, and critical evaluation, and are encouraged to include in their student outcomes an emphasis on the evolving realities of the 21st century (such as globalization, diversity, scientific developments, and social dynamics) and the responses of an educated person to these forces.

2.0 Integrative Capstone Linkage to GER Preamble Student Outcomes

The Integrative Capstone course lends a programmatic aspect to the GER and serves as the culminating educational experience for the UAA GER. All Integrative capstone courses are designed to reflect the following GER Preamble Student Outcomes:

- Communicate effectively in a variety of contexts and formats;
- Locate and use relevant information to make appropriate personal and professional decisions;
- Adopt critical perspectives for understanding the forces of globalization and diversity; and
- Integrate knowledge and employ skills gained to synthesize creative thinking, critical judgment, and personal experience in a meaningful and coherent manner.

Thus, Integrative Capstone courses (Tier 3) serve to integrate GER Basic College-Level Skills (Tier 1) with the disciplinary perspectives of the Disciplinary Areas (Tier 2). Moreover, capstone courses provide opportunities to integrate GER skills and perspectives into disciplinary and professional majors. Table 1: Integrative Capstone Goals, Outcomes, & Criteria links GER Preamble Outcomes to specific capstone instructional goals and student outcomes.

3.0 Integrative Capstone Courses, Disciplinary Majors, and Professional Programs

Integrative Capstone courses are provided by the faculties of UAA's Schools and Colleges to require students to synthesize academic achievement in the GER. Capstone courses may count for major and GER credit, but in all cases capstone courses must be approved by the GER Subcommittee of UAB in the normal review process.

4.0 Integrative Capstone Instructional Goals and Student Outcomes

The following table is meant neither to be definitive nor exclusive; it is designed to provide a framework for faculty developing and proposing capstone courses to the GER Subcommittee of UAB. These are Integrative Capstone goals and outcomes, but the way those goals and outcomes are met is dependent upon faculty creativity, disciplinary expertise, and pedagogical focus. In order to facilitate faculty innovation and maintain coherence across the Integrative Studies category, Integrative Capstone courses must address the following instructional goals and student outcomes:

- Knowledge Integration must be incorporated as part of course design and specifically addressed as part of outcomes assessment for the proposed course.
- At least three out of the four other instructional goals and student outcomes must be incorporated as part of course design; and

The specific criteria are as follows:

5.0 Integrative Capstone Goals, Outcomes, & Criteria

- Knowledge Integration must be incorporated as part of course design and specifically addressed as part of outcomes assessment for the proposed course.

KNOWLEDGE INTEGRATION
Instructional Goal: Knowledge Integration Knowledge Integration concerns the ability to integrate information, skills, and concepts from multiple disciplines for personal development, professional enhancement, and civic engagement.
Student Outcome: Knowledge Integration Students shall demonstrate both the ability to access, judge, and compare diverse fields of knowledge and to evaluate critically their own views in relation to these different fields of knowledge.
Capstone Criteria Capstone courses require students to create connections between different disciplines and their real-life applications and to require students to synthesize their skills and knowledge across disciplinary domains.

- At least three out of the following four other instructional goals and student outcomes must be incorporated as part of course design;

1. EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION
<p>Instructional Goal 1: Effective Communication</p> <p>Effective Communication embraces aural, visual, and language arts, including the ability to read, write, speak, and listen.</p>
<p>Student Outcome 1: Effective Communication</p> <p>Students shall demonstrate communication skills necessary to function professionally in the 21st century.</p>
<p>Capstone Criteria</p> <p>Capstone courses should be communication intensive, should provide opportunities for oral presentations, and must include analytical writing assignments appropriate to the pedagogical focus of the course. Students should be evaluated on both the form and content of their analytical writing and oral communication assignments through ample and timely feedback on their communication skills.</p>
2. CRITICAL THINKING
<p>Instructional Goal 2: Critical Thinking</p> <p>Critical Thinking concerns the ability to apply intellectual standards (clarity, accuracy, precision, relevance, depth, breadth, and logic) to the quality of reasoning about a problem, issue, or situation.</p>
<p>Student Outcome 2: Critical Thinking</p> <p>Students shall demonstrate the ability to think critically by defining issues clearly, identifying problems accurately, describing situations precisely; bringing to those issues, problems, and situations material of appropriate relevance, depth, and breadth; analyzing them logically; and conceptualizing reasoned solutions.</p>
<p>Capstone Criteria</p> <p>Capstone courses should include an explicit component of critical thinking appropriate to the pedagogical focus of the course and emphasize the critical dimensions of academic reasoning in disciplines relevant to the course.</p>
3. INFORMATION LITERACY
<p>Instructional Goal 3: Information Literacy</p> <p>Information Literacy concerns the skills and aptitudes necessary to determine the nature of required information, to access it effectively and efficiently, to evaluate it critically, and to incorporate it ethically into academic research and life long learning.</p>
<p>Student Outcome 3: Information Literacy</p> <p>Students shall practice the responsible, legal, and ethical uses of information, including demonstrating a thorough understanding of the issues surrounding plagiarism and the canons of academic honesty, and students should be able to demonstrate the ability to distinguish logical and appropriate uses of information from specious and fallacious uses of information in various media.</p>
<p>Capstone Criteria</p> <p>Capstone courses should include an investigative component appropriate to the pedagogical focus of the course and should include the analysis, critique, and usage of information from various media (including print sources).</p>

4. QUANTITATIVE PERSPECTIVES
Instructional Goal 4: Quantitative Perspectives Quantitative Perspectives calls upon students' background quantitative skills to create and/or critique mathematical and/or statistical models.
Student Outcome 4: Quantitative Perspectives Students shall demonstrate the ability to perform (original) and/or to critique (published) studies using the scientific method or standardized statistical practice.
Capstone Criteria Capstone courses, to the degree possible, should include quantitative analysis appropriate to the pedagogical focus of the course.

6.0 Skills Demonstration and Assessment Requirement

Continuous assessment for academic improvement must be a part of UAA general education. The GER Subcommittee of UAB has determined that Integrative Capstone courses are the appropriate place to assess student achievement in the GER, and students will be asked to participate in assessment activities relating to the goals of general education as well as assessment of the goals of the capstone course. *Therefore, all Integrative Capstone courses must:*

- Assess student performance in knowledge integration and at least two of the chosen instructional goals and student outcomes referenced in 4.0; and
- Generate student artifacts that demonstrate achievement in the student outcomes for the course.

In course design and outcomes assessment, capstone courses should demonstrate (1) the integration of GER Basic-College Level Skills (Tier 1) and GER Disciplinary Areas (Tier 2), (2) student achievement in the GER Preamble Outcomes, (3) and if the capstone course is required by the major, the linkage of GER Preamble Outcomes to the major area of study and/or program requirements. GER assessment in all cases will focus upon student achievement, not faculty evaluation.

7.0 Integrative Capstone Summary

7.1 Description

The Integrative Capstone is the culmination of the GER experience, and students can enroll in capstone courses only after (1) completing the 12-credit Basic-College Level Skills component of the GER (the Written, Oral, and Quantitative Skills requirements) and (2) reaching Junior standing (60 total credit hours). Capstone courses are therefore upper-division by their nature. There is no restriction on additional prerequisites for Capstone courses. This enables current courses within Degree Major programs to be

(re)structured to meet the criteria. All capstone courses must be approved through the normal curriculum review process.

7.2 Content and Focus

While specific content areas are not specified for Capstone courses, a thematic element is expected. Every effort should be made to design the course to address the complexity of 21st century life (the forces of globalization and diversity; scientific, social, and technological change) and the response of an educated person to these forces.

Furthermore, Capstone courses that include as a prerequisite documented proficiency in a world language or Alaska Native language could be excellent examples of UAA

Integrative Capstone courses

7.3 Pedagogical Mode

Courses that are cross-disciplinary, interdisciplinary, and multidisciplinary and address the goals of General Education have an inherent Capstone character. The interrelationships among academic disciplines, as well as their distinctive perspectives and intersections, should also be apparent in capstone courses to allow a student to critically reflect on his/her undergraduate experience. Interdisciplinary staffing, while not essential, is encouraged when practical.

7.4 Double-Slotting

Any course in another category in the GER menu is not eligible for the Integrative Capstone, unless Departments ask to delete a course from the GER menu simultaneously with its approval for the Capstone category. Capstone courses may also meet degree major or program requirements as well as Integrative Capstone credit.

7.5 Assessment Requirements

In addition to any course-based Skills Demonstration and Assessment (6.0 above), Integrative Capstone courses may also be required to participate in assessment of student achievement in the GER preamble outcomes. In all cases, the purpose of these assessment activities is curriculum development and program improvement rather than faculty evaluation.

7.6 Summary of Integrative Capstone curricular requirements:

- Credits: 3
- Type of Course: Upper Division Capstone (300- and 400-level). Special Note: Completion of all Tier 1 GER (Basic College-Level Skills) Course and Junior Standing.
- Possible Teaching Modes: Creative modes of delivery that model the goals of the Integrative Capstone category, including, but not limited to multidisciplinary, interdisciplinary, and cross-disciplinary teaching are encouraged.

- Assessment Activities: Integrative Capstone courses will be required to assess student achievement of the Integrative Criteria and may be required to participate in GER assessment.
- Review Process: Integrative Capstone courses may be new courses or developed out of currently existing courses. In all cases, prospective capstone courses must be submitted to and approved through the regular curricular review process (College Curriculum Committees, UAB, and Faculty Senate).