

University of Michigan-Dearborn
General Education Program and Assessment
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In Fall 2015, UM-Dearborn initiated a new general education program, called [the Dearborn Discovery Core \(DDC\)](#), which is organized into nine categories and based on learning outcomes written by faculty committees. The learning outcomes are mapped onto UM-Dearborn's Goals for Undergraduate Learning. All four colleges at UM-Dearborn participate in the DDC. Both lower-division and upper-division courses are included in the DDC, and three of the categories are reserved for upper-division courses, typically courses embedded in a student's major. Thus, undergraduates are practicing the DDC learning outcomes throughout their curriculum at UM-Dearborn.

The nine DDC categories are: 1) Critical & Creative Thinking; 2) Written & Oral Communication; 3) Quantitative Thinking & Problem Solving; 4) Natural Sciences; 5) Humanities & the Arts; 6) Social and Behavioral Analysis; 7) *Upper-Level Writing Intensive; 8) *Intersections [learning across disciplines and cultures] 9) *Capstone Experience.
*Designates an upper-level category.

For a course to be included in the DDC, a program or faculty member completed [an application](#) that demonstrated how the course addresses and assesses the category's learning outcomes. The applications were vetted by a DDC faculty committee. (These course applications continue to be accepted on a rolling basis.) A course can count for up to three DDC categories.

DDC Assessment: At the outset, the university began collecting assessment evidence from DDC courses. UM-Dearborn is now in the second year of a five-year DDC assessment cycle. In 2015-16 we collected assessment reports from all courses/instructors in the first three DDC categories. This year we are collecting assessment reports from all courses/instructors in the second three DDC categories. And in 2017-18 we will collect assessment reports from the final three (upper-division) categories. In year four, 2018-19, faculty committees for each category will convene and evaluate the course assessment evidence, along with other evidence (faculty survey, student survey, DDC course enrollment report), and make recommendations for changes to the DDC committee. The DDC committee will then issue a report to the Faculty Senate, which will implement a new (and improved) DDC in year five, 2019-20.

The course assessment reports take the form of a Qualtrics survey which asks eligible instructors to enter the number of students in the course who Exceeded (optional measure), Met, Approached (optional measure), or Did Not Meet each of the learning outcomes in the DDC category. It also asks instructors what assessment instruments they used, and requires them to analyze and reflect upon the students' achievement and possible closing-the-loop actions. The quantitative and qualitative data from these surveys is compiled by the Campus Assessment Coordinator and shared with the campus Assessment Committee and program assessment coordinators on an ongoing basis. For courses in which multiple instructors submit assessment surveys (such as PSYC 101), the program creates a course summary report. As mentioned above, these surveys and reports will be used by faculty committees, to be convened for each DDC category in 2018, to evaluate the effectiveness of the category and its learning outcomes.

High Impact Practices: UM-Dearborn is in the process of enhancing its many opportunities for our students' academic engagement. It has reorganized and strengthened its internship programs and increased opportunities for Academic Service Learning and Study Abroad. The introduction of a Capstone category in the new general education program -- which in effect requires that every UM-Dearborn undergraduate student will have an intensive, culminating research experience -- has meant that many programs across campus have modified their curricula to incorporate greater high impact experiences for their majors.