

## Associate of Arts, A.A.

### Mission Statement

The Associate of Arts (A.A.) program at UWF aims to prepare students to be productive citizens and achieve individual fulfillment through the study of the Liberal Arts. The General Education course of study component provides instruction and experiential opportunities for students in an environment promoting scholarship, critical thinking, free inquiry, creativity, and clear and candid communication as well as develops standards for ethical engagement and sensitivity to various perspectives to enable constructive discourse with others.

Through its focus on breadth of knowledge across the areas of Communication, Mathematics, Humanities, Social Science, and Natural Science, the A.A. curriculum prepares new generations of civic and professional leaders, fosters individual growth, and supports vibrant communities by exploring the richness of cultural and artistic life. Students will gain a foundation of knowledge of human cultures and the physical and natural world, develop principles of personal and social responsibility for living in a diverse world, and advance intellectual and practical skills that are essential for all learning.

### Student Learning Outcomes

Students graduating with a degree in Associate of Arts should be able to:

#### Communication

- Compose and revise a researched academic paper that adheres to discipline-specific conventions.
- Produce (through revision) effective written communications that support author intent and address a specific audience.

#### Critical Thinking

- Apply mathematical principles to determine a strategy for solving a problem.
- Execute appropriate mathematical techniques for solving a problem and interpret results of a solution.
- Interpret and analyze tools and techniques of communication within cultural forms or cultural contexts.
- Solve problems using social science methods.
- Evaluate scientific information using appropriate tools and strategies of the discipline.

#### Integrity/Values

- Identify the intrinsic value of culture and cultural artifacts.
- Reason ethically in an appropriate disciplinary context.

### Assessment of Student Learning Outcomes

The assessment plan for General Education depends on embedded assessments. Course assignments that all students complete as part of course requirements provide data relevant to the learning outcomes for General Education.

Each instructor is expected to include at least one assignment that provides students with opportunities to demonstrate skills and provide assessment evidence for each of the SLO(s) identified for the distribution area the course serves. For example, separate measures for two or more learning outcomes may be generated through scores students earn on different elements of a rubric used to evaluate the assignment.

The assessment model proposed for General Education creates structures and processes that will allow the curriculum (including specific SLOs) to evolve over time, based on evidence from assessment data. The annual “making sense” meetings for faculty who teach courses within a distribution area will entail the review of assessment findings from the current year and identify strengths and weaknesses observed in student learning reflected in the embedded assessments. The goal for these discussions is to engage faculty in a meaningful conversation about effective practices for promoting student learning on the shared learning outcomes of the distribution area. The discussions will be informed by aggregated assessment evidence but will focus on effective strategies for teaching and learning. Outcomes of the discussions may include any of the following:

- Suggestions for learning activities instructors might adopt that have been effective in promoting learning on a shared SLO.
- Suggestions for common rubrics or other approaches for aggregating findings across multiple courses (emphasizing the impact of the collection of courses in the distribution area on student learning instead of the impact of a single course).
- Discussions of assignments, projects, and other student work that provide meaningful evidence about student learning on a shared SLO.
- Suggestions to revise language in the SLOs or to replace an existing SLO with a new outcome that better reflects the shared values and goals of the courses that define the distribution area.

Student graduation rates will be tracked to analyze student retention including the percentage of students who reenrolled after receiving their A.A. degree; the percentage of A.A. students retained through their junior year; the percentage of A.A. students retained through graduation; and the percentage of students retained through graduation who did not receive their A.A.

Further, students will be indirectly assessed through a perception survey to determine their level of satisfaction with the General Education curriculum, whether or not they agree the program achieved its mission objectives, and whether or not they feel prepared to continue in their chosen field of study.

### **Employment Opportunities for Associate of Arts Graduates**

The Associate of Arts program provides students with broad-based, foundational proficiencies applicable to any major. Students who earn the Associate of Arts are prepared to progress into their baccalaureate degree coursework.

### **Find Out More about Associate of Arts at UWF:**

<https://catalog.uwf.edu/undergraduate/associatearts/>