

GLOBAL & CULTURAL AWARENESS

Foundation Document Criteria for General Education Certification

Approved by FGEC May 2019

Requirement Purpose

The university's *Mission* affirms students at BYU should "understand important ideas in their own cultural tradition as well as that of others." The *Mission* concludes with the hope BYU graduates will "greatly enlarge Brigham Young University's influence in a world we wish to improve." Since one *Aim* of a BYU education is to enlarge the intellect through exposure to broad areas of human knowledge, awareness of traditions, and cultures outside one's own, this is an important and necessary part of each student's education. The Global & Cultural Awareness component is founded upon the Lord's injunction for us to recognize, like the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:25-37), everyone is our neighbor and deserving of understanding, love, and compassion.

The *Aims of a BYU Education* document stipulates students cultivate an informed awareness of the peoples, cultures, languages, and nations of the world. The Global & Cultural Awareness requirement seeks to help BYU students come not only to see the relativity of many of their own culturally-derived notions but also to "go forth to serve," having engaged in meaningful discussion about or hands-on experience in dealing with real-world global issues and problems. Furthermore, seeing the world through others' eyes helps students gain empathy and charity toward diverse cultures.

This charge can be accomplished in several ways. For example, students may become well-acquainted with the culture of another country or better understand the cultures of immigrants or minorities within his or her own society – especially by exploring how these relate to global identities and stories. It can also be achieved by studying how cultures in different countries address a similar theme or issue and are in turn affected by it.

Learning Outcomes

1. Students will acquire *informed awareness* of a) a culture other than the student's primary (or most familiar) culture, or b) the interplay of multiple cultures, languages, and/or nations.
2. Students will engage in *thoughtful reflection* of that informed awareness in a structured, guided manner under the direction of a faculty member, as evidenced by student written or spoken analyses (often involving comparison) in consideration of a culture, multicultural interplay, or global issue.
3. Students will develop greater empathy and charity as they gain a broader perspective and learn to see themselves from another's point of view.

Expected Long-Term Learning Outcomes

1. Students will regularly seek information about other peoples, cultures, nations, and religions from sources they have come to recognize as reliable.
2. Students will seek to identify and take advantage of opportunities to learn and interact with people of different cultures and ethnicities and find commonalities.
3. Students will engage respectfully with people from different backgrounds, beliefs, or perspectives, and be able to recognize and deal with prejudice, bigotry, ethnocentrism, false pride, and other barriers to effective intercultural communication at the local, state, national, and international levels.

Course Characteristics

1. A focus of the course must be to develop an informed awareness and thoughtful reflection of a culture other than the student's primary (or most familiar) culture, by exploring the interplay of cultures, languages, issues, and/or nations. Readings, discussions, and student written work should engage all of the elements listed below, but courses may place a different relative emphasis on each (i.e., one course may emphasize b) and c) over a) and d), although the latter two will still be addressed in the course).
 - a. Meaningful exploration outside the student's primary culture. If that culture exists locally, the course should explore its roots and history as well.
 - b. A critical examination of the constructed nature of culture and the relativity of cultural beliefs and norms.
 - c. Informed conversations about inclusion and the value of diversity.
 - d. Exploration of a particular theme or issue from multiple cultural perspectives.
2. Cultural and global issues should be presented and discussed in a manner which models respect for differing experiences and perspectives.
3. Students should apply a discipline-specific methodology to their thinking, writing, or other expressions on issues of cultural significance.