

## CU Boulder Common Curriculum Draft of Learning Objectives and Outcomes for Campus Review

Common Curriculum Planning Committee  
April 12, 2022

PLEASE SEND INPUT TO: [commoncurriculum@colorado.edu](mailto:commoncurriculum@colorado.edu)

### PART A. OVERVIEW OF PROPOSED STRUCTURE

Following upon the Academic Futures recommendation that CU Boulder should develop “a campus-wide common learning experience and/or curriculum” for undergraduate education and Chancellor Philip DiStefano’s directive to design “a campus-wide common learning experience and a common set of intended learning outcomes,” the Common Curriculum Planning Committee was charged by Provost Russell Moore with “the identification and design development of a common curriculum through which our undergraduate students will achieve shared learning goals that address integrative values and common touchpoints throughout the undergraduate career.” Provost Moore further charged the committee with developing “campus-wide learning goals that reflect both a deliberate statement about who we are as a university and that complement and enhance all of our educational programs.” In keeping with its charge, the Common Curriculum Planning Committee hereby submits this draft of Common Curriculum Learning Objectives and Outcomes as the foundational step of forming a common curriculum.

The common curriculum integrates curricular pathways across all schools and colleges with co-curricular experiences offered across campus. Spanning the entire student journey, the common curriculum defines the learning objectives and learning outcomes that make up a CU Boulder undergraduate experience. It ensures that all students are prepared as civically engaged citizens and leaders, lifelong learners, and contributors to a thriving future

### PART B. OUTLINE OF LEARNING OBJECTIVES AND OUTCOMES

The Common Curriculum Planning Committee has defined the overall learning objective of the Common Curriculum—i.e., the *purpose and distinctive nature of a CU Boulder education*—as preparing our students to take part in creating *Sustainable Futures*: for themselves, for society, and for the world.

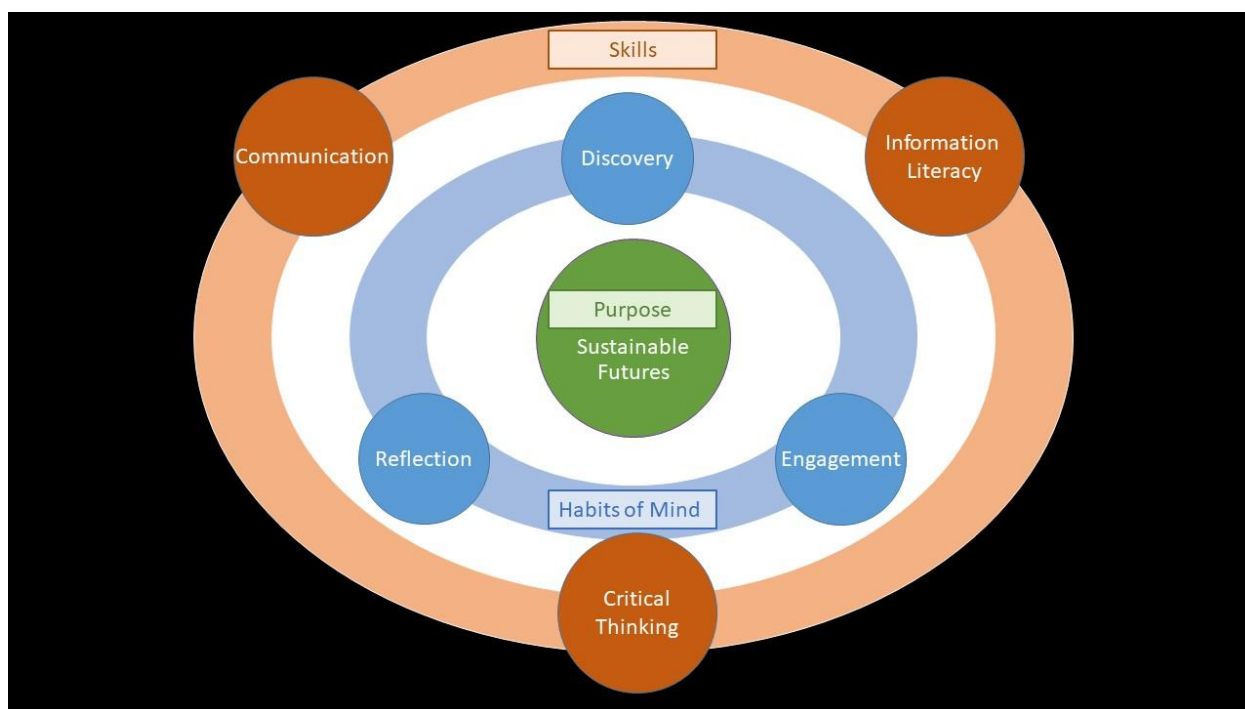
In addition, the committee has identified learning objectives that define *three habits of mind* that support this overall objective:

*Discovery*  
*Reflection*  
*Engagement*

Finally, the committee has identified *three essential skills* for accomplishing these goals:

*Communication*  
*Critical Thinking*  
*Information Literacy*

These seven total learning objectives will not be sequentially taught, individual courses; nor will they be “covered” in the first year or in lower-division courses only. Rather, these learning objectives will be woven throughout the fabric of a student’s entire undergraduate academic experience at CU Boulder.



## **PART C. DETAILS OF LEARNING OBJECTIVES AND OUTCOMES**

### **Purpose of the Common Curriculum**

#### **Sustainable Futures: Self, Society, World**

##### **LEARNING OBJECTIVE**

**At CU Boulder, students will gain an understanding of the interdependence of individual, societal and environmental wellbeing and of the necessity for stewardship to advance balanced and equitable futures for all. Throughout their CU Boulder education, students will cultivate skills and habits of mind that enable them to thrive as individuals and contribute solutions to a thriving world.**

##### **LEARNING OUTCOMES**

**Graduates of CU Boulder will be able to:**

1. Reflect on their role in advancing resilient communities and demonstrate the ability to act as stewards for sustainable futures.
2. Define and explain different discipline-specific definitions of and approaches to sustainability with an emphasis on how sustainability might be understood within the student's area of study and how sustainable solutions may be achieved through collaboration among different disciplines.
3. Envision and articulate actions that foster individual well-being, social equity, long-term economic vitality, and the health of the natural environment.

### **Habit of Mind: Discovery**

#### **Preparing to Be a Lifelong Thinker and Problem-Solver**

##### **LEARNING OBJECTIVE**

**CU Boulder students will be active members of a university community that is devoted to the advancement of knowledge and marked by creation and creativity across all areas of research, scholarship, creative work, and innovation. They will cultivate curiosity and develop new ways of thinking, working, and living by participating in applied learning and invention and publicly presenting their research, scholarship, and creative work.**

## LEARNING OUTCOMES

**Graduates of CU Boulder will be able to:**

1. Articulate and defend to others positions, theories, practices, and/or methods on a topic they have defined and researched.
2. Investigate phenomena from multiple and distinct disciplinary perspectives, using ideas from one perspective to inform and critique another, and analyzing points of agreement and disagreement.
3. Synthesize diverse ideas in creative and innovative ways to craft novel insights, new conceptual models, and/or practical solutions to real-world problems.

### **Habit of Mind: Reflection**

#### **Preparing to Engage in Self-Understanding, Sustain Personal Well-Being, and Make Ethical Choices**

##### LEARNING OBJECTIVE

**CU Boulder students will understand their roles and responsibilities as self-reflective, self-sustaining individuals, as members of groups in a diverse society, and as ethical, civically literate citizens committed to building a more equitable world.**

##### LEARNING OUTCOMES

**Graduates of CU Boulder will be able to:**

1. Reflect on, assess, and foster their own learning and well-being.
2. Understand their own identities, beliefs, and social positionings in relation to other people.
3. Apply ethical reasoning to comprehend how their actions affect themselves and others, and how the policies, functions, and actions of systems and institutions affect individuals and groups of people.

### **Habit of Mind: Engagement**

#### **Preparing to Participate in a Diverse Democracy**

##### LEARNING OBJECTIVE

**CU Boulder students will know how to make positive contributions to a diverse world. As citizens and leaders, students will engage productively across differences to identify and address barriers to inclusion, equity, and sustainability. Citizenship involves developing an orientation to the public**

**good—understanding that this concept is always contested—and a commitment to democratic processes to address differences. Leadership involves promoting collaboration, motivating others, and elevating the strengths of individuals.**

#### **LEARNING OUTCOMES**

**Graduates of CU Boulder will be able to:**

1. Articulate a personal approach to leadership and community engagement and an orientation to the public good, recognizing that the public good is contested and leadership and engagement can take many forms across different communities and cultures.
2. Participate in respectful and empathetic dialogue to explore barriers to inclusion, equity, and sustainable futures, recognizing how histories, cultures, and values shape identities, practices, and social positionings and valuing the diverse perspectives of others.
3. Engage publicly through activities that positively contribute to their communities, such as community-based learning, volunteering, and internships and publicly engaged research, scholarship and creative work.

#### **Skill: Critical Thinking**

#### **LEARNING OBJECTIVE**

**CU Boulder students will be able to conceptualize and synthesize an original belief about or solution to an issue through reasoned questioning, evaluation, and judgment derived from disciplined analysis, interpretation, inference, observation, discussion, and/or experience, and then to apply the finding in an intellectually transformative way, with an understanding of its relevance and implications.**

#### **LEARNING OUTCOMES**

**Graduates of CU Boulder will be able to:**

1. Absorb material by attentive reading, listening, research, observation, and experience.
2. Actively analyze, interpret, and evaluate sources of information, recognizing the different perspectives, identities, and social positions that may inform those sources.
3. Apply learning and insight to create original arguments, craft solutions to problems, and participate in informed discussion and collaboration.

## **Skill: Communication**

### **LEARNING OBJECTIVE**

**CU Boulder students will be able to use appropriate media (written, spoken, visual, symbolic, digital) for effective expression, argumentation, and communication of ideas and sentiments to audiences.**

### **LEARNING OUTCOMES**

**Graduates of CU Boulder will be able to:**

1. Write and speak logically, with clarity, and with originality, using the process of composition to enhance intellectual discovery and unravel complexities of thought.
2. Demonstrate facility with the fundamentals of persuasion as these are adapted to a variety of situations and audiences.
3. Demonstrate advanced facility in the modes of communication most relevant to their particular majors or prospective professions.

## **Skill: Information Literacy**

### **LEARNING OBJECTIVE**

**CU Boulder students will be able to negotiate increasingly complex information environments and to understand different modalities of information, how information is produced and valued, and their own involvement in information landscapes.**

### **LEARNING OUTCOMES**

**Graduates of CU Boulder will be able to:**

1. Demonstrate curiosity and initiative to approach inquiry as an open-ended experience with information and to create new knowledge while participating ethically in communities of learning.
2. Analyze how social, legal, technological, and economic factors affect the creation, accessibility, and use of information.
3. Recognize that information evolves and emerges from particular contexts and that authority and ways of knowing are legitimized within particular situations.