

GEC Resolution on LEAP “Essential Learning Outcomes”

Whereas Old Westbury is an accredited member institution of the Middle States Commission on Higher Education (“Middle States”), and;

Whereas, in its recent “Standards of Accreditation and Requirements of Affiliation” (2014), Middle States placed greater emphasis on *institutional objectives* (also known as “college-wide objectives”), and;

Whereas, Middle States specifically emphasizes that those should relate to the institution’s Mission, and;

Whereas, increasingly, Middle States expects member institutions to apply findings from ongoing assessment of curricular effectiveness to future planning, and;

Whereas, since its introduction in 2006, the American Association of Colleges and University’s “LEAP” (Liberal Education and America’s Promise) program has become a national standard in liberal higher education, and;

Whereas, the four LEAP “Essential Learning Outcomes” are:

1. Knowledge of Human Cultures and the Physical and Natural World;
2. Intellectual and Practical Skills
3. Personal and Social Responsibility
4. Integrative and Applied Learning

And, *whereas*, Old Westbury’s Mission and Guiding Principles strengthen LEAP’s Essential Learning Outcomes by adding a “commitment to a more just and sustainable world;”

And whereas, Old Westbury’s local Diversity requirement *further* strengthens the LEAP outcomes because it is designed to “expose students to various forms of diversity and their connections to issues of social justice [and]....challenge assumptions about race, cultural/ethnic identity, religious background, gender, social class, sexual orientation, age and disability,”

Be it resolved that the Faculty Senate adopt the LEAP Essential Learning Outcomes and the College’s Mission and Guiding Principles as its model for the creation of institutional (or college-wide) learning outcomes, and;

Be it further resolved that the Senate, in consultation with the administration, create a joint faculty-administrative body to begin the process of developing workshops with a goal of “mapping” our curriculum onto the LEAP institutional outcomes.

Approved by the General Education Committee, March 11, 2016

Approved by the Curriculum and Academic Planning Committee, April 8, 2016

Approved by the Faculty Senate, April 22, 2016

LEAP's Essential Learning Outcomes¹

The LEAP campaign is organized around a robust set of "Essential Learning Outcomes" -- all of which are best developed by a contemporary liberal education. Described in [College Learning for the New Global Century](#), these essential learning outcomes and a set of "[Principles of Excellence](#)" provide a new framework to guide students' cumulative progress through college.

Through its VALUE Initiative, AAC&U has developed a set of [rubrics](#) to assess many of the following learning outcomes. Beginning in school, and continuing at successively higher levels across their college studies, students should prepare for twenty-first-century challenges by gaining:

Knowledge of Human Cultures and the Physical and Natural World

- Through study in the sciences and mathematics, social sciences, humanities, histories, languages, and the arts

Focused by engagement with big questions, both contemporary and enduring

Intellectual and Practical Skills, Including

- Inquiry and analysis
- Critical and creative thinking
- Written and oral communication
- Quantitative literacy
- Information literacy
- Teamwork and problem solving

Practiced extensively, across the curriculum, in the context of progressively more challenging problems, projects, and standards for performance

Personal and Social Responsibility, Including

- Civic knowledge and engagement—local and global
- Intercultural knowledge and competence
- Ethical reasoning and action
- Foundations and skills for lifelong learning

Anchored through active involvement with diverse communities and real-world challenges

Integrative and Applied Learning, Including

- Synthesis and advanced accomplishment across general and specialized studies

Demonstrated through the application of knowledge, skills, and responsibilities to new settings and complex problems

¹ From "The Essential Learning Outcomes," in *The LEAP Vision for Learning: Outcomes, Practices, Impact and Employers' Views* (AACU, 2011), https://www.aacu.org/sites/default/files/files/LEAP/EssentialOutcomes_Chart.pdf

Old Westbury's Mission and Guiding Principles²

Mission

SUNY College at Old Westbury is a dynamic and diverse public liberal arts college that fosters academic excellence through close interaction among students, faculty and staff. Old Westbury weaves the values of integrity, community engagement, and global citizenship into the fabric of its academic programs and campus life. In an environment that cultivates critical thinking, empathy, creativity and intercultural understanding, we endeavor to stimulate a passion for learning and a commitment to building a more just and sustainable world. The College is a community of students, teachers, staff, and alumni bound together in mutual support, respect, and dedication to the Mission.

Guiding Principles

We are guided by these concepts and principles:

Liberal Education. Old Westbury promotes rigorous intellectual inquiry, grounded in ethical and civic values, that connects learning in the classroom with engagement in the community. Through an integrative curriculum, innovative pedagogy, and small classes we provide a transformative educational experience that fosters the capacity for life-long intellectual and personal growth.

Integrity. Because all human relationships, as well as a just society, rely on the principles of truth, trust and fairness, Old Westbury is committed to the highest ethical standards in academic, institutional and community life.

Participatory Governance. To exemplify in all College policies the values we espouse, Old Westbury upholds the principles of transparency, accountability and democracy in every aspect of governance and planning conducted by students, staff, faculty, administration, trustees and friends of the College alike.

Intercultural Understanding. Old Westbury promotes an inclusive environment and critical awareness of the multiplicity and range of human perspectives and identities (including race, ethnicity, religion, gender, class, sexuality, age, and (dis)ability, among others) through the interactions of students, faculty and staff within its diverse learning community.

Sustainability. The campus community is dedicated to the stewardship of our environment and fragile ecosystem and to equity in the allocation and preservation of shared resources—such as air, water, and land—on campus, on Long Island, and in the larger world.

Social Justice. Old Westbury promotes social justice and equality in living and learning through its historic commitment to educational empowerment, diversity, access, equity, self-determination, community activism and responsible global citizenship.

² From the *SUNY College at Old Westbury Strategic Plan, 2010-2016* (February 18, 2010).