

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: Final

SR-12-13-17-BAPC

First, recommends approval of the revision (outlined below) to Marshall University’s Core Domains of Critical Thinking.

Second, recommends the adoption of the proposed learning outcomes for each domain.

Third, recommends adoption of this document as Marshall University’s Baccalaureate Degree Profile

Proposed Domains of Critical Thinking	Proposed Learning Outcomes
Communication Fluency	Students will develop cohesive oral, written, and visual communications tailored to specific audiences.
Creative Thinking	Students will outline multiple divergent solutions to a problem, develop and explore risky or controversial ideas, and synthesize ideas/expertise to generate innovations.
Ethical and Civic Thinking	Students will determine the origins of core beliefs and ethical principles, evaluate the ethical basis of professional rules and standards of conduct, evaluate how academic theories and public policy inform one another to support civic well-being, and analyze complex ethical problems to address competing interests.
Information Literacy	Students will revise their search strategies and employ appropriate research tools, integrate relevant information from reliable sources, question and evaluate the complexity of the information environment, and use information in an ethical manner.
Integrative Thinking	Students will make connections and transfer skills and learning among varied disciplines, domains of thinking, experiences, and situations.
Intercultural Thinking	Students will evaluate generalizations about cultural groups, analyze how cultural beliefs might affect communication across cultures, evaluate how specific approaches to global issues will affect multiple cultural communities, and untangle competing economic, religious, social, or geographical interests of cultural groups in conflict.
Inquiry Based Thinking	Students will formulate focused questions and hypotheses, evaluate existing knowledge, collect and analyze data, and draw justifiable conclusions.
Metacognitive Thinking	Students will evaluate the effectiveness of their project plan or strategy to determine the degree of their improvement in knowledge and skills.
Quantitative Thinking	Students will analyze real-world problems quantitatively, formulate plausible estimates, assess the validity of visual representations of quantitative information, and differentiate valid from questionable statistical conclusions.

RATIONALE:

In April 2011 Marshall University received an invitation from the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) of the North Central Association to test the Lumina Foundation’s *Degree Qualifications Profile (DQP)*. In her letter to Dr. Stephen Kopp, dated April 1, 2011, Dr. Sylvia Manning, President of the HLC, stated, “The opening paragraph of the Lumina Foundation’s document makes the claim the ‘A Degree Profile – or qualifications framework – illustrates clearly what students should be expected to know and be able to do once they earn their degrees – at any level. This Degree Profile thus proposes specific learning outcomes that benchmark the associate, bachelor’s and master’s degrees – which constitute the great majority of postsecondary

degrees awarded by U.S. colleges and universities – regardless of the student’s field of specialization.’” She explained that Marshall University, in concert with other institutions, would be asked to test that claim.

Marshall University began this process with several goals in mind. They were

1. To use the DQP to help us critically examine our expected outcomes for students in each degree program and at each degree level.
2. To examine the extent to which the broad areas of learning and degree appropriate outcomes outlined in the DQP align with outcomes expected of students who graduate with Associate’s, Bachelor’s and Master’s degrees (in each degree program) from Marshall University.
3. To examine the reasons for lack of alignment between Marshall’s and the DQP’s degree expectations where lack of alignment exists.
4. To point out where the DQP does not include outcomes faculty at Marshall University think are necessary for the well-educated Marshall graduate at each degree level.
5. To provide feedback to the HLC and to the Lumina Foundation for the purpose of improving the DQP.
6. To develop a degree profile unique to Marshall University.

Feedback revealed that a number of Marshall’s degree programs did not align to these DQP broad areas of learning.

1. Civic Learning – 31 out of 92 programs – 34% did not align
2. Quantitative Fluency – 25 out of 92 programs – 27% did not align
3. Engaging Diverse Perspectives – 24 out of 92 programs – 26% did not align

When analyzing reasons for this lack of alignment, the following reason seemed especially important.

1. Some of the DQP’s Broad Areas of Learning are too narrowly defined and this was especially true for the broad areas of learning to which our programs most frequently did not align.

In concert with the broader testing of the DQP and, cognizant of the information reported from Degree Programs, a group of 24 faculty has used the DQP as a diagnostic to examine the university’s current core domains of thinking with the intention of more clearly defining the graduation expectations for all Marshall graduates, *regardless of major*, at each degree level. We propose that this be considered for adoption as the Marshall University Degree Profile.

Proposal Concerning Marshall's Core Domains of Critical Thinking

DQP Domain	Current Marshall Domains of Critical Thinking	Proposed Marshall Domains of Critical Thinking	Rationale	Proposed Marshall Learning Outcomes
Communication Fluency	Oral/Written/ Visual Communication	Communication Fluency	Marshall's idea of this domain has not changed – it still should include the three aspects of communication. Since the outcome will make this explicit, we argue that the term “communication” in the domain is sufficient to encompass all aspects of communication.	Students will develop cohesive oral, written, and visual communications tailored to specific audiences.
None	Aesthetic/ Artistic Thinking	Creative Thinking	This area of learning is not part of DQP, but is an important part of Marshall's Core Domains. As currently written, though, the domain is too discipline-specific. We argue that the proposed name, “creative thinking” expands this domain to include all disciplines across campus.	Students will outline multiple divergent solutions to a problem, develop and explore risky or controversial ideas, and synthesize ideas/expertise to generate innovations.
Civic Learning	Ethical/Social/ Historical Thinking	Ethical and Civic Thinking	While civic learning is part of the DQP, ethics is not – and consensus from the MU community during the testing of the DQP was that it's important to explicitly include ethics across all degree programs. We argue that the DQP language of civic learning is still useful because it is broader, but inclusive of, social and historical thinking. Finally, in testing the DQP, we found that a significant number of programs did not align to Civic Learning. Therefore, we have written our outcome to be broader than that of the DQP.	Students will determine the origins of core beliefs and ethical principles, evaluate the ethical basis of professional rules and standards of conduct, evaluate how academic theories and public policy inform one another to support civic well-being, and analyze complex ethical problems to address competing interests.
Use of Information Resources	Information/ Technical Literacy	Information Literacy	Consensus from the MU community during the testing of the DQP was that “use of information resources” is an important learning domain. We propose to change MU's current name from “information/technical literacy” to “information literacy” because the latter suggests the level of analysis and evaluation in which students should engage to	Students will revise their search strategies and employ appropriate research tools, integrate relevant information from reliable sources, question and evaluate the complexity of the information environment, and use information in an ethical manner.

			critically examine information sources.	
Broad, Integrative Knowledge	None	Integrative Thinking	Although this is an element we propose be added to Marshall’s Domains, we argue that it was implicitly included before, in both FYS and CT course designs. The addition of this domain simply makes its inclusion explicit.	Students will make connections and transfer skills and learning among varied disciplines, domains of thinking, experiences, and situations.
Engaging Diverse Perspectives	Multicultural/ International Thinking	Intercultural Thinking	Marshall faculty have expressed a commitment to multicultural and international learning at least since the inception of the “Marshall Plan” in the early 1990s. It continues to be a priority, e.g. the INTO project. However, we noted that a large number of Marshall’s Degree Programs did not align to this DQP area of learning. Therefore, we have defined the Marshall Domain’s outcome much more broadly than was the “Engaging Diverse Perspectives” outcome in the DQP.	Students will evaluate generalizations about cultural groups, analyze how cultural beliefs might affect communication across cultures, evaluate how specific approaches to global issues will affect multiple cultural communities, and untangle competing economic, religious, social, or geographical interests of cultural groups in conflict.
Analytic Inquiry	Scientific Thinking	Inquiry Based Thinking	In the testing of the DQP, there was consensus from MU’s programs that analytic inquiry, which we argue broadly corresponded to MU’s “scientific thinking” domain, is an important domain of thinking. Our current proposal modifies the DQP language because “analytic” suggests only one element of inquiry. Likewise, MU’s current domain name, “scientific,” suggests a narrowly defined method of inquiry.	Students will formulate focused questions and hypotheses, evaluate existing knowledge, collect and analyze data, and draw justifiable conclusions.
None	None	Metacognitive Thinking	We propose adding this domain of thinking based on input from Marshall faculty.	Students will evaluate the effectiveness of their project plan or strategy to determine the degree of their improvement in knowledge and skills.
Quantitative Fluency	Abstract/ Mathematical Thinking	Quantitative Thinking	A significant number of degree programs did not map to the Quantitative Fluency outcome in the DQP. Yet, the domain of “Abstract/Mathematical” thinking was included as part of Marshall’s original Core Domains and there is national consensus that quantitative fluency is an essential skill. Therefore, we developed the MU outcome to	Students will analyze real-world problems quantitatively, formulate plausible estimates, assess the validity of visual representations of quantitative information, and differentiate valid from questionable statistical conclusions.

			be more broadly stated than the ones in the DQP. The recommended domain name change from the original MU Core Domain wording to that of the DQP is recommended to emphasize the interdisciplinary nature of this domain.	
Applied Learning	None	None	Not explicitly included in our proposed Degree Profile. However, most assessments, especially at the capstone level, will require application.	N/A
Specialized Knowledge	None	None	Specialized Knowledge will be part of the outcomes of each degree program and, therefore, will differ among degree programs. However, it is expected that students will use specialized knowledge to demonstrate the domains of critical thinking.	N/A

**COMMITTEE
RECOMMENDATION**

SR-12-13-17 BAPC

Recommends approval of the Recommendation for Revision of Core Domains and adoption of MU Degree Profile.

RATIONALE: The objective is to accurately and uniquely define Marshall University's Core Domains and Learning Outcomes.

The recommendations are to:

1. Revise the University's Core Domains of Critical Thinking as proposed in the document titled "Recommendation for Revision of Core Domains and adoption of MU Degree Profile".
2. Adopt learning outcomes for each Domain of Critical Thinking as proposed in the document titled "Recommendation for Revision of Core Domains and adoption of MU Degree Profile".
3. Adopt the document as a component of Marshall University's Degree Profile at the Baccalaureate Level.

This recommendation is based on the document developed by a core group of 24 faculty members representing each undergraduate college in the university and as revised based on feedback received from members of the University Assessment Committee, the General Education Council, and faculty senators.

FACULTY SENATE CHAIR:

APPROVED BY THE
FACULTY SENATE: Eldon R. Lamm DATE: 1-31-13

DISAPPROVED BY THE
FACULTY SENATE: _____ DATE: _____

UNIVERSITY PRESIDENT:

APPROVED: [Signature] DATE: 2/12/13

DISAPPROVED: _____ DATE: _____

COMMENTS: The BAPC members have voted (after their December meeting) and approved the document entitled: "Recommendation for Revision of Core Domains and adoption of MU Degree Profile".

