



University Council

March 10, 2023

UNIVERSITY CURRICULUM COMMITTEE – 2022-2023

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Graduate School – Christof Meile
Ex-Officio – Provost S. Jack Hu
Undergraduate Student Representative – Kate Lindgren
Graduate Student Representative – Yehia Abdelsamad

Dear Colleagues:

The attached proposal for a new Academic Affairs Policy Statement No. 24, Institutional Competencies, will be an agenda item for the March 17, 2023, Full University Curriculum Committee meeting.

Sincerely,

Susan Sanchez, Chair

cc: Provost S. Jack Hu
Dr. Marisa Pagnattaro

Academic Affairs Policy Statement No. 24 Institutional Competencies

1. References

- a. Statutes of the University of Georgia, Article IV, Section 2
- b. Bylaws of the University Council of the University of Georgia, Section IIIB4
- c. Task Force on Student Learning and Success (2017).
- d. Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC), Principles of Accreditation, Standards 8.2.a, 8.2.b.

2. Goals

A set of institutional competencies aims to:

- Conceptualize students' academic experience as an integrated experience wherein curricular and cocurricular opportunities align
- Orient curricular and co-curricular learning experiences to be more relevant to students' overall education, career readiness, and lifelong learning

3. University of Georgia Institutional Competencies

By engaging in curricular, co-curricular, and/or non-credit bearing experiences that address each respective competency, students will demonstrate:

Critical Thinking

The ability to pursue and comprehensively evaluate information before accepting or establishing a conclusion, decision, or action.

Learning outcomes:

1. Consider, engage, and analyze opposing viewpoints or arguments
2. Evaluate the credibility of information
3. Support one's own conclusion, decision, or action with sound reasoning and judgment
4. Interpret inferences and develop subtleties of symbolic and indirect discourse

Analytical Thinking

The ability to reason, interpret, analyze, and solve problems from a wide array of authentic contexts.

Learning Outcomes:

1. Express and manipulate quantitative information, concepts, and thoughts in verbal, numeric, graphical, computational, and symbolic forms.
2. Identify and apply appropriate methodology or theoretical frameworks to inquiry
3. Organize and synthesize evidence to reveal insightful patterns, differences, or similarities
4. Support, evaluate, and communicate conclusions based on quantitative or qualitative data

Communication

The ability to effectively develop, express, and exchange ideas in written, oral, or visual form.

Learning Outcomes:

Written Communication

1. Develop, support, and effectively express ideas in written form using language with clarity and precision.

2. Tailor communication strategy, style, and convention appropriately or various audiences and/or contexts

Oral Communication

3. Develop, support, and effectively express ideas in oral form using language with clarity and precision.
4. Tailor communication strategy, style, and convention appropriately or various audiences and/or contexts

Interpersonal Communication

5. Navigate interpersonal communication with respect, maturity, and/or awareness of cultural differences
6. Tailor communication strategy, style, and convention appropriately or various audiences and/or contexts

Social Awareness & Responsibility

The capacity to understand the interdependence of people, communities, and self in a global society.

Learning Outcomes:

1. Recognize ethical issues and apply different ethical perspectives to ethical dilemmas in a variety of settings
2. Analyze the impact of human behavior(s) on the physical, organizational, and/or social environment
3. Reflect upon how one's social identities and roles shape one's worldview and interactions
4. Develop an awareness, appreciation, and knowledge of cultures and communities beyond one's own

Creativity & Innovation

The capacity to combine or synthesize existing ideas, images, or expertise in original ways and the experience of thinking, reacting, and working in an imaginative way characterized by innovation, divergent thinking, and risk taking

Learning Outcomes:

1. Experiment and take appropriate risks to creatively solve problems and advance knowledge
2. Synthesize and/or transform ideas in original ways
3. Consider and incorporate alternative or contradictory perspectives in designing solutions
4. Develop imaginative or original response(s) to a need or inspiration

Leadership & Collaboration

The capacity to engage in the relational process of optimizing personal and collective strengths toward a common goal.

Learning Outcomes:

1. Engage and motivate others toward a shared vision through encouragement and trust
2. Plan, initiate, manage, complete, and evaluate a project or process individually or as a group
3. Address conflict directly and constructively to strengthen team cohesion and effectiveness
4. Consider and incorporate perspectives and feedback from community members to inform equity-minded, sustainable solutions

4. Procedures

- a. Matters related to objectives, goals, requirements, and general education are the responsibility of the University Council Curriculum Committee. Council consideration of these matters should follow consideration and recommendation by the Committee.
- b. The University Council Curriculum Committee will review proposals for courses and non-curricular activities from the faculty of the University which they view as appropriate for meeting Institutional Competencies.

5. Assessment

Per Academic Affairs Policy 2.04.4, university-wide academic programs, the University Curriculum Committee (UCC) is the faculty body responsible for developing SLOs and SLO Assessment Plans. The UCC and the Office of the Vice President for Instruction (OVPI) must collaborate to collect and analyze data. OVPI is responsible for reporting on the extent to which these SLOs are achieved. Finally, the UCC is responsible for recommending changes and improvements to this policy and its subsequent implementation.

Academic Affairs Policy Statement No. 24 Institutional Competencies
APPENDIX

BACKGROUND

A nationwide survey of provosts (NILOA, 2017) found that most institutions have statements of learning for all undergraduate students. A review of UGA's comparator and aspirational peers revealed several institutions with core learning objectives that span classroom and out-of-classroom educational experiences.

Select Examples from Aspirational Peers:

- University of Wisconsin at Madison – [Essential Learning Outcomes](#)
- University of Minnesota – [University Student Learning & Development Outcomes](#)

Select Examples from Comparator Peers:

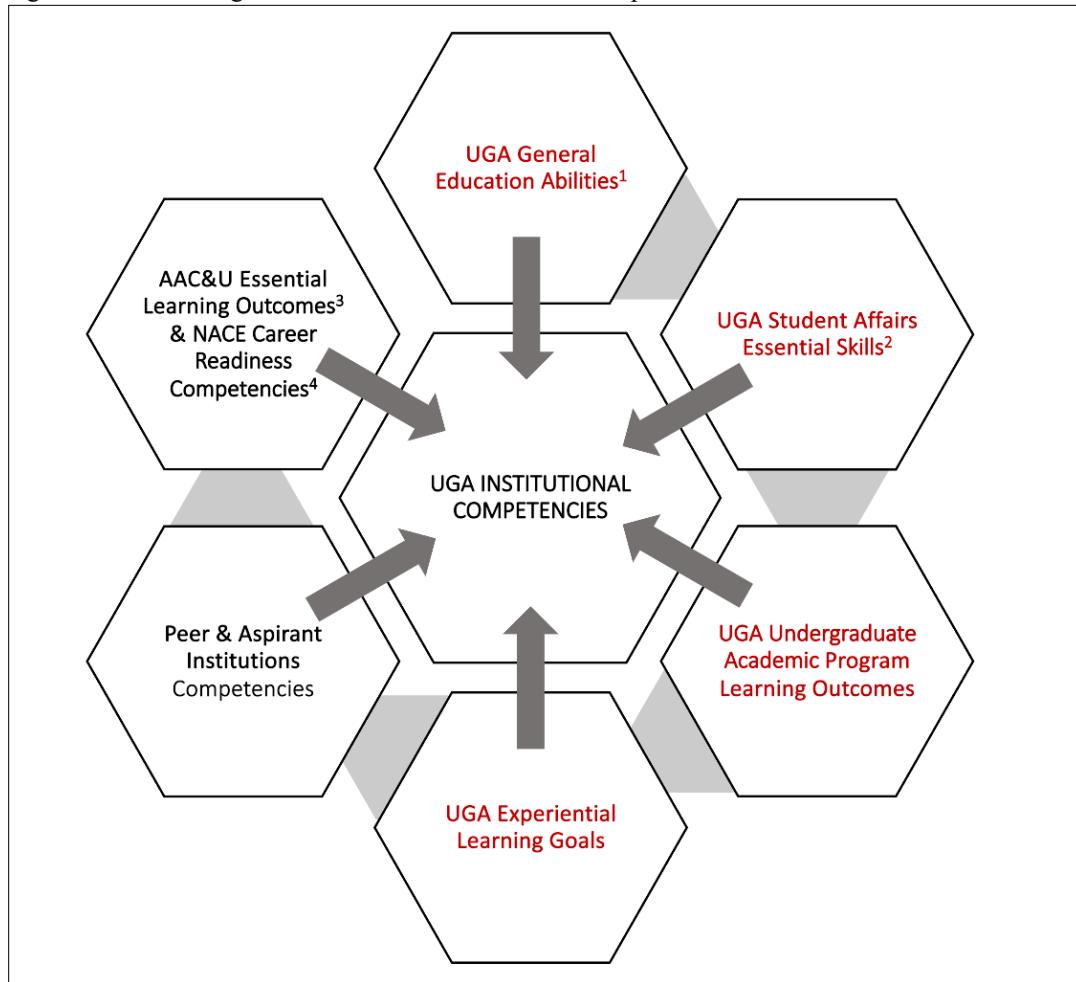
- University of California, Davis – [Campus Goals for Undergraduate Learners](#)
- North Carolina State University – [Pack Proficiencies](#)

The rationale for identifying institution-wide undergraduate learning outcomes is to shift how we conceptualize students' academic experience from a decentralized, fragmented collection of courses to more integrated experiences wherein curricular and cocurricular opportunities align (Jankowski & Marshall, 2017). This approach helps foster "reflective, active learners, able to effectively discuss their knowledge and skill sets with employers" (Jankowski & Marshall, 2017, p. 49).

The opportunity to gain skills in areas most needed by employers, and more importantly, the ability to articulate these acquired skills with examples, strategically prepares UGA graduates for success. As an institution, systematically assessing students' acquisition of key competencies allows us to identify strengths and opportunities for increased resources.

Beginning in 2020, a working group representing the Office of Instruction, Assessment, Registrar's Office, Office of Experiential Learning, and Division of Student Affairs met regularly to develop and refine competencies with associated learning outcomes. This iterative process began with a review of existing established undergraduate learning goals at the University (e.g., General Education Abilities, Student Affairs Essential Skills, undergraduate program learning outcomes), supplemented and calibrated by a review of peer and aspirant institutions' shared competencies, the AAC&U's Essential Learning Outcomes, and NACE Career Readiness skills (see Figure 1).

Figure 1. Contributing Sources for UGA Institutional Competencies



Notes

Red text indicates internal UGA sources.

¹ Written Communication, Oral Communication, Quantitative Reasoning, Ethical Reasoning, Critical Thinking

² Agility, Communication, Critical Thinking, Leadership & Collaboration, Social Awareness & Responsibility

³ Inquiry and Analysis, Critical Thinking, Creative Thinking, Communication, Quantitative Literacy, Information Literacy, Teamwork, Problem-Solving, Civic Engagement, Intercultural Knowledge and Competencies, Ethical Reasoning

⁴ Career & Self-Development, Communication, Critical Thinking, Equity & Inclusion, Leadership, Professionalism, Teamwork, Technology

Evolving draft versions of the competencies were reviewed, discussed, and strengthened through conversations with the General Education subcommittee of the University Curriculum Committee, the Experiential Learning Council, Division of Student Affairs representatives, the Office of Assessment, Office of Accreditation and Institutional Effectiveness, UGA Career Center, Student Learning Outcomes Executive Committee, and leadership within the Office of Instruction.

The proposed competencies and learning outcomes have been identified to surface the learning already happening across students' educational experiences at UGA and make it more transparent. Additionally, these competencies reflect nationally recognized essential skills for post-collegiate success. Notably, this set of competencies includes, and expands upon, the General Education Abilities approved in 2008:

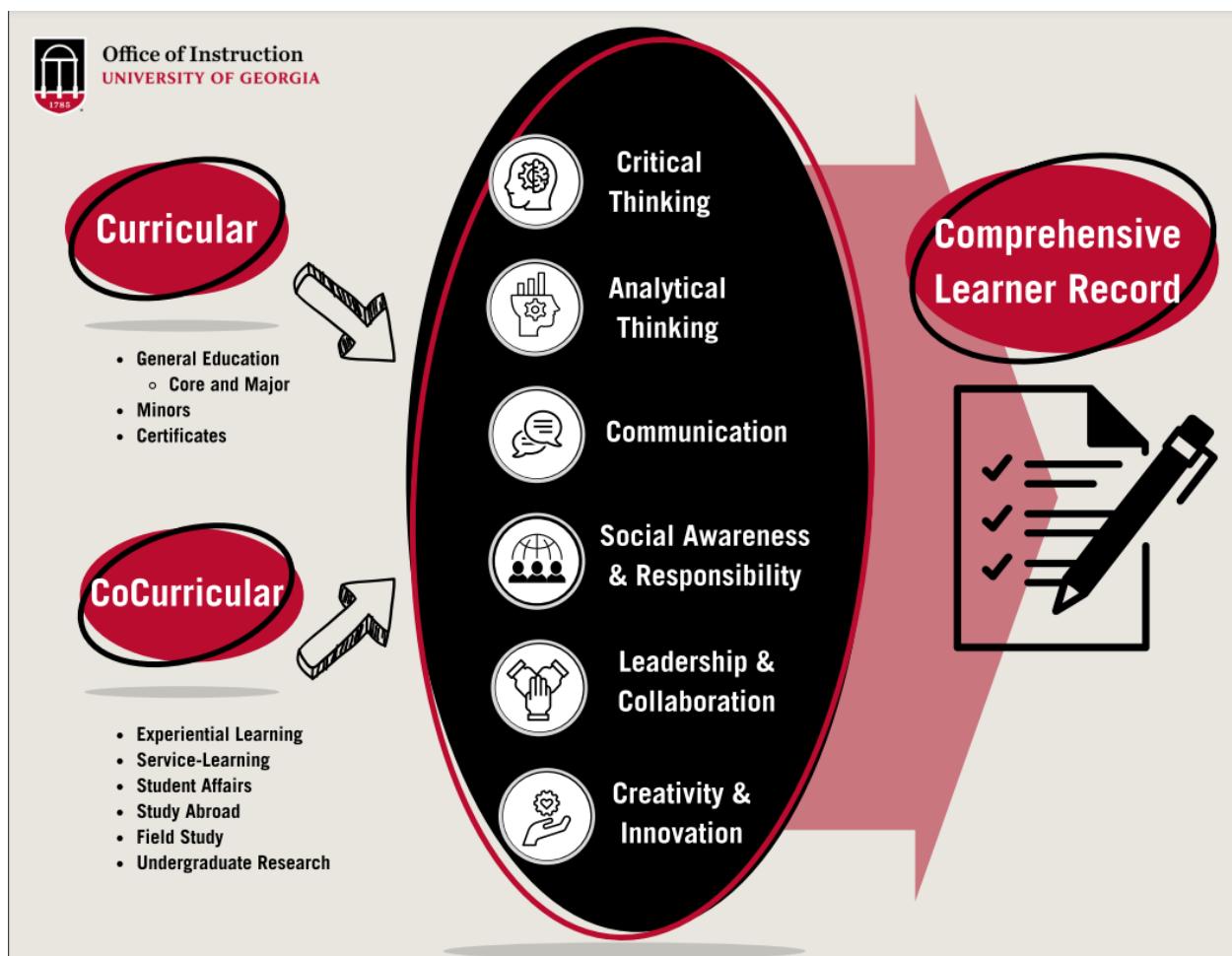
Critical Thinking, Written Communication, Oral Communication, Moral Reasoning, and Quantitative Reasoning.

IMPLEMENTATION

Students will have ample opportunities for competency acquisition by participating in the wide curricular and co-curricular offerings at UGA. Academic and co-curricular programs are invited and encouraged to submit approval requests for courses and activities that align with most learning outcomes within a particular competency. (Note: there is no ‘requirement’ aspect related to these competencies, neither for student completion nor academic offerings). A forthcoming Institutional Competency Committee will regularly convene to approve course and activity requests.

When a student completes a course or activity that has been approved to meet a competency, it will be reflected on their comprehensive learner record (CLR). The CLR, an evolution of the traditional transcript, provides a holistic learning summary. A well-designed CLR helps students articulate the knowledge and skills gained due to their cumulative educational experience. The Office of Instruction is working to implement the digital infrastructure for a CLR and will provide this tool to students in 2024 (see Figure 2).

Figure 2. UGA Undergraduate Institutional Competencies



EXAMPLES

The following courses and co-curricular experiences could be considered for approval to meet an institutional competency:

| Competency | Course Example | Co-Curricular Example |
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| CRITICAL THINKING <i>The ability to pursue and comprehensively evaluate information before accepting or establishing a conclusion, decision, or action.</i> Learning outcomes: 1. Consider, engage, and analyze opposing viewpoints or arguments 2. Evaluate the credibility of information 3. Support one's own conclusion, decision, or action with sound reasoning and judgment 4. Interpret inferences and develop subtleties of symbolic and indirect discourse | DANC 4500: Studies in Dance History Relevant Course Objectives: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To examine the development of dance, including the changes and influences affecting that development; • To discover how dance reflects changes in society and historical periods; • To assimilate the historical information; • To understand the broad concepts in/of meaning, reasons, and motivations for dance in various cultures throughout the world; • To clearly express thoughts and ideas about the relationship between the historical information and the broad concepts in coherent and cohesive essays; • To investigate, analyze, synthesize, and write knowledgeably and coherently on one aspect of dance history within the time periods covered in the course in a written course project | University Judiciary (Office of Student Conduct) The University Judiciary is the student-run organization charged with promoting a climate of integrity at the University of Georgia by conducting formal hearings for students alleged to have violated conduct regulations. By participating in University Judiciary, students will gain valuable critical thinking skills, ethical decision-making skills, and demonstrate leadership on campus by promoting social responsibility. Additionally, the group seeks to proactively educate the University community to help students understand the expectations that the University has for appropriate and responsible behavior. |
| ANALYTICAL THINKING <i>The ability to reason, interpret, analyze, and solve problems from a wide array of authentic contexts.</i> Learning Outcomes: 1. Express and manipulate quantitative information, concepts, and thoughts in verbal, numeric, graphical, computational, and | SOCI 3590: Qualitative Methods of Social Research Relevant Course objectives: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read and critique classical and contemporary research studies using a variety of qualitative approaches. • Determine when a qualitative research approach is appropriate, and which approach best fits a question. | IMPACT Service Breaks Site Leader Experience (Engagement, Leadership, and Service) The mission of the IMPACT program is to engage University of Georgia students in an affordable, week-long, substance-free, experiential service-learning project that encourages an understanding of pressing social issues in a significant way. Each student |

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| <p>symbolic forms.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Identify and apply appropriate methodology or theoretical frameworks to inquiry 3. Organize and synthesize evidence to reveal insightful patterns, differences, or similarities 4. Support, evaluate, and communicate conclusions based on quantitative or qualitative data | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Through short-term projects, practice a number of qualitative research data collection and analysis techniques, including the use of analysis software such as MAXQDA. • Learn to assess the quality and validity of qualitative social research and to understand research ethical issues as they apply to qualitative inquiry. • Learn to write up results of qualitative research studies | <p>engages in 40 hours of service centered on a different social issue, such as Youth Empowerment, Public Health, Shelter and Resource Access, or Environmental Justice. IMPACT Site Leaders are responsible for planning all aspects of their trip's experience, including scheduling of service, locating housing, identifying cultural exploration sites, budgeting, risk management, and alumni engagement. Site Leaders design and facilitate regular post-service reflections during the trip, centered on dialoguing about the intersection of social identity with critical examination of the service experience. Finally, Site Leaders are responsible for managing all participant group dynamics, concerns, and emergencies during trip experiences.</p> |
| <p>COMMUNICATION <i>The ability to effectively develop, express, and exchange ideas in written, oral, or visual form.</i></p> <p>Learning outcomes:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop, support, and effectively express ideas in written/oral form using language with clarity and precision. 2. Tailor communication strategy, style, and convention appropriately for various audiences and/or contexts 3. Navigate interpersonal communication with respect, maturity, and/or awareness of cultural differences | <p>HIST 3361: Europe's Revolutionary Century, 1789-1900</p> <p>Relevant course objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Write stylistically appropriate and mature papers and essays using processes that include discovering ideas and evidence, organizing that material, and revising, editing, and polishing the finished paper(s) | <p>Pandora - Introduction to Yearbook Copywriting (Engagement, Leadership, and Service)</p> <p>Students who engage in this experiential learning opportunity will learn the fundamentals of journalistic copywriting as they produce the official University yearbook. Students will understand and implement AP writing style and will be taught how to tailor copywriting style for both stories and caption writing. Students will learn the importance of writing to a target audience and will learn to adapt their writing style to fit the topic and audience of their given story.</p> |

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| <p>SOCIAL AWARENESS & RESPONSIBILITY <i>The capacity to understand the interdependence of people, communities, and self in a global society.</i></p> <p>Learning Outcomes:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Recognize ethical issues and apply different ethical perspectives to ethical dilemmas in a variety of settings 2. Understand the impact of human behavior(s) on the physical, organizational, and/or social environment 3. Reflect upon how one's social identities and roles shape one's worldview and interactions 4. Develop an awareness, appreciation, and knowledge of cultures and communities beyond one's own | <p>ANTH 3540: Multicultural Health Care</p> <p>Relevant course objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify specific examples of how culture and society shape health in U.S. communities • Describe theoretical approaches used by medical anthropology and health-focused social science research • Persuasively discuss research exploring health patterns among groups in the U.S. | <p>Senior World Leaders (International Student Life)</p> <p>The Senior World Leader (SWL) is an integral part of the International Student Orientation Program. In line with the mission statement of the Department of International Student Life, Senior World Leaders provide the transition tools and support for international students new to the United States and the University of Georgia. As a team, SWLs serve as student leaders responsible for helping to plan, manage, facilitate, and evaluate the International Student Orientation program (approximately 300 incoming students each fall), including but not limited to programmatic efforts, marketing, registration, World Leader selection, World Leader training, sponsorship solicitation and fundraising, logistical planning and administrative tasks, and program development.</p> |
| <p>CREATIVITY & INNOVATION <i>The capacity to combine or synthesize existing ideas, images, or expertise in original ways and the experience of thinking, reacting, and working in an imaginative way characterized by innovation, divergent thinking, and risk taking</i></p> <p>Learning Outcomes:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Experiment and take appropriate risks to creatively solve problems | <p>BCHE 4650: Animal Cell Biomanufacturing</p> <p>Relevant course objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apply mathematical models to cell growth and product synthesis • Identify, formulate, and solve problems related to the scale-up of biomanufacturing processes • Design a biomanufacturing system, component, or process to meet desired needs | <p>Dawg Camp Media Intern (Office of Student Transitions)</p> <p>The Dawg Camp Media Internship represents an opportunity for students to build their professional portfolio and resume while strengthening the communications and campus presence of the Dawg Camp Extended Orientation program. The Media Intern plays a vital role in the documenting and highlighting of Dawg Camp programs – primarily, Dawg Camp Discovery, Connect,</p> |

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| <p>and advance knowledge</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Synthesize and/or transform ideas in original ways 3. Consider and incorporate alternative or contradictory perspectives in designing solutions 4. Develop imaginative or original response to a need or inspiration | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communicate effectively via a group setting about contemporary bio-manufacturing processes | <p>Fusion, Rise, Innovate and Classic City. The intern works with all Student Transitions staff and Dawg Camp Leadership Team members (student coordinators) to build promotional and record keeping media materials.</p> |
| <p>LEADERSHIP & COLLABORATION</p> <p><i>The capacity to engage in the relational process of optimizing personal and collective strengths toward a common goal.</i></p> <p>Learning Outcomes:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Engage and motivate others toward a shared vision through encouragement and trust 2. Plan, initiate, manage, complete, and evaluate a project or process individually or as a group 3. Address conflict directly and constructively to strengthen team cohesion and effectiveness 4. Consider and incorporate perspectives and feedback from community members to inform equity-minded, sustainable solutions | <p>ENVE 4910: Capstone Design I</p> <p>Course description:</p> <p>First course in a two-semester sequence designed to provide environmental engineering students with a major design experience. Students will participate on a project team that matches their interests and will be selected for participation under guidance of Environmental Engineering faculty mentors.</p> <p>(Nontraditional Format): Project teams will function independently albeit under the guidance of faculty mentors. As this is a senior-level course, students will fully engage in the application of the knowledge developed throughout their engineering programs of study.</p> | <p>Residence Hall Association Executive Board (University Housing)</p> <p>Members of RHA Executive Board lead these efforts, developing residence hall policies, procedures, and programs to best serve the interests of those students living on campus. The Executive Board sponsors programs for residents across campus, writes legislation for residence halls, and aims to give the on-campus residents at UGA a voice.</p> |