

Skidmore College Goals for Student Learning and Development: Draft

The goals that follow reflect certain emphases that are deeply engrained in Skidmore's history and culture: on creativity, on civic responsibility, and on interdisciplinary thinking. As in the past, we aim to graduate students who can think deeply and creatively, communicate well and act effectively. We continue to ask our students to link theoretical and practical learning, and now also to develop intercultural understanding and an appreciation of their roles as global citizens. These goals have much in common with those of all liberal arts colleges who share a common mission, though we take pride in having long approached them in our own distinctive way.

Our goals emerge in particular from our collective sense of a Skidmore education as a transformative experience: we want our graduates to possess both knowledge and capacities that enable them to embrace change and apply their learning lifelong in new contexts. We believe that this learning takes place throughout our students' experience, both inside the classroom and out, on campus and off. Our goals articulate, then, in language that is as clear and lean as possible, our understanding of students' learning and development at Skidmore. They lay the groundwork for our continued inquiry into the evidence of that learning.

I. Knowledge

- Acquire knowledge of human cultures and the physical world through study in the arts, humanities, languages, mathematics, natural sciences, and social sciences
- Understand social and cultural diversity in national and global contexts
- Demonstrate advanced learning and synthesis in both general and specialized studies

II. Intellectual Skills

- Think critically, creatively and independently
- Gather, analyze, integrate, and apply varied forms of information; understand and use evidence
- Communicate effectively
- Interact effectively and collaboratively with individuals and across social identities
- Engage in and take responsibility for learning

III. Personal and Social Values

- Examine one's own values and their use as ethical criteria in thought and action
- Interrogate one's own values in relation to those of others, across social and cultural differences
- Develop practical competencies for managing a personal and professional life
- Apply learning to find solutions for social, civic and scientific problems

IV. Transformation

- Integrate and apply knowledge and creative thought from multiple disciplines in new contexts
- Embrace intellectual humility
- Foster habits of mind and body that enable a person to live deliberately and well
- Develop an enduring disposition to learn

Appendix: These documents were fundamental sources for the Goals.

1. Skidmore College Mission Statement
2. Intersections of Paradigms, 2008 [including key phrases from the *Strategic Plan*, 2005]
3. Skidmore College Core Abilities, 1997-8
4. Skidmore College Academic Vision Statement, 2003-04
5. Liberal Education and America's Promise (LEAP) Essential Learning Outcomes
6. Wabash National Study of Liberal Arts Colleges: Liberal Arts Outcomes