

Seminar Approach to General Education & Scholarship (SAGES) Outcomes

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Mission: The SAGES program is a seminar-based, writing-intensive learning experience that emphasizes collaboration, transformative thinking, and scholarly inquiry. Students and faculty work together to explore the ideas, individuals, and innovations that have shaped human inquiry in a variety of fields. Each SAGES course invokes the power of seminar discussion and foregrounds writing and public speaking to promote the learning of all participants. The program's developmental sequence deliberately moves from general forms of inquiry, writing, and oral presentation to those practiced in individual scholarly disciplines. Because oral and written presentation skills are fundamental to the SAGES curriculum, the following Learning Outcomes serve as the critical "common thread" throughout the program.

Learning Outcomes for First Seminar

First Seminar introduces students to the CWRU academic community, including the unique opportunities for collaboration with the University Circle Institutions and the city of Cleveland, and emphasizes modes of inquiry, writing, and speaking used throughout the University.

At the end of First Seminar, students should be able to:

- Engage in thoughtful, productive discussion with peers, faculty, and other professionals;
- Give and receive criticism respectfully and constructively;
- Establish a personal voice in oral and written expression;
- Present concepts and beliefs in clear, precise, and graceful language;
- Frame substantial arguments, first by making interesting claims and then by marshaling and interpreting relevant evidence;
- Assess whether an argument (including their own) is properly supported according to basic academic standards;
- Demonstrate awareness and engagement with different perspectives or positions in their own writing (opposing positions, alternative proposals, etc.);
- Recognize their responsibilities—as writers and speakers, readers and listeners—in promoting scholarly dialogue, and then meet those responsibilities;
- Analyze and assess different kinds of writing from a variety of sources; and,
- Refine their phrasing, analyses, and arguments through a rigorous process of revision.

Writing Expectations for SAGES First Seminars

Students in First Seminars should produce about 20-25 pages of finished writing (i.e., submitted for instructor review as opposed to "free writing" or independent journals) in a semester. Instructors should plan to devote significant instructional time to developing students' strategies for and practices of organization, revising, and editing of

writing. We recommend that students in First Seminar write 3-5 shorter papers, some of which should be evaluated over the course of several drafts in order to provide opportunities for directed revision. First Seminar instructors should instruct students to retain their work for the required First Seminar Writing Folder.

Please Note: as part of their University Writing Requirement, all students are required to submit with their SAGES Writing Portfolio writing from their First Seminar. Faculty and Writing Instructors should encourage students to retain electronic copies of all of their written work in SAGES in at least two locations (i.e., both on a local hard drive and on a University server).

English Department Recommended Writing Outcomes for First Seminars

By the end of First Seminar, students should be able to:

- Engage critically and considerately with the written ideas of peers.
- Identify and summarize the main points of a published piece of writing supplied by the instructor.
- Respond critically in writing to scholarly ideas from a variety of perspectives or positions.
- Craft a specific question or thesis statement that can form the basis for sustained inquiry on a topic.
- Become familiar with common forms of academic argumentation, including the strategies writers use to persuade different audiences.
- Identify representative University and University Circle resources to support writing projects.
- Write in a consistent, clear, and grammatical personal voice.
- Reflect critically on their own ideas.
- Describe Case's Academic Integrity Policy.
- Explain the role of and significance of differences among various citation formats (MLA, APA, Chicago, etc.).
- Refine phrasing and ideas through directed revision.

Learning Outcomes for University Seminars

University Seminars build on the common experiences in the First Seminar and focus on academic modes of thinking and writing specific to scholarly discourse about the natural and technological world, the social world, and the symbolic world. These topical courses offer cross-disciplinary insight and attention to effective inquiry and presentation.

Students in University Seminars continue to develop the skills and dispositions emphasized in First Seminar. In addition, they should be acquiring the ability to:

- Pose a relevant, narrowly focused research question;
- Construct extended arguments that incorporate quotations and ideas from multiple sources;

- Analyze and evaluate a variety of sources and forms of evidence; and,
- Demonstrate thorough familiarity with one method of citation and follow its conventions—not mechanically, but with full appreciation of their ethical significance.

Writing Expectations for SAGES University Seminars

Students in University Seminars should produce about 20-25 pages of finished writing (i.e., submitted for instructor review as opposed to “free writing” or independent journals) in a semester. Instructors should plan to devote significant instructional time to developing students' strategies for and practices of organization, revising, and editing of writing. We recommend that students in University Seminars write at least 2 shorter papers and a longer argumentative paper (10-12 pages) that incorporates primary and secondary source material, cites those sources appropriately, and includes a bibliography. This longer paper may be enhanced by using the shorter assignments to develop portions of the longer, researched argument (e.g., summarizing key research findings; articulating counter arguments and contrary evidence; explaining the purpose of the research to a lay audience).

Please Note: as part of their University Writing Requirement, all students are required to submit with their SAGES Writing Portfolio a research essay (10-12 pages in length) from a University seminar that integrates primary and secondary source material, cites those sources appropriately, and includes a bibliography. Faculty and Writing Instructors should encourage students to retain electronic copies of all of their written work in SAGES in at least two locations (i.e., both on a local hard drive and on a University server).

English Department Recommended Writing Outcomes for University Seminars

By the end of a University Seminar, students should be able to:

- Identify, summarize, and respond critically to an array of scholarly ideas and texts gathered through independent research.
- Develop a focused, informed, and specific research question (appropriate to the topic of the course and to the context of a scholarly problem).
- Define a scholarly position in a clear, grammatical voice that is characteristic of an academic community.
- Draft persuasive and/or analytical arguments of appropriately delimited scope for a 10-12 page paper. These arguments should include strong and clear claims, appropriate presentation and interpretation of evidence, and substantial exploration of the warrants/backings that authorize them.
- Cite consistently and comprehensively a variety of print and electronic resources using a citation format appropriate to the area of inquiry.
- Demonstrate a facility with the sentence structures and rhetorical moves most common to academic writing.
- Demonstrate a capacity for self-directed revision of writing for effective argumentation and for stylistic clarity.

Learning & Writing Outcomes for Departmental Seminars

Departmental Seminars introduce students to disciplinary modes of inquiry and presentation.

Students in Departmental Seminars continue to develop the skills and dispositions emphasized in First and University Seminars. In addition, they should be acquiring the ability to:

- Articulate a question or problem of interest to the discipline;
- Skillfully employ research methods to address that question or problem;
- Produce clear, precise academic prose in appropriate modes (e.g., lab report, close reading, analytical argument, persuasive argument, quantitative analysis); and,
- Provide useful, relevant criticism to others—and respond constructively to criticism—within a disciplinary context.

Learning & Writing Outcomes for Senior Capstone Projects

Senior Capstone Projects encourage students to pursue independent research and scholarship, with the guidance of faculty from their chosen major or discipline.

In their Senior Capstone Projects, students demonstrate their ability to:

- Articulate a problem or question that is both interesting and relevant to their chosen field(s) of study;
- Identify an appropriate research method or analytical response to the question or problem, and present the method/approach in discipline-specific modes of writing (such as a project proposal);
- Conduct sustained research—designing and conducting experiments, exploring an archive, analyzing data, reading publications in their field—sufficient to draw conclusions significant to their discipline;
- Produce a substantial and clearly articulated response to the question or problem in an appropriate academic mode (e.g., report, essay, critical response, etc.); and,
- Present publicly their response – oral and/or written – to the question or problem.