University Studies Objectives: The Citizen Scholar

Utah State University is one of the nation’s premier student-centered land-grant and space-grant universities. We foster the principle that academics come first; we cultivate diversity of thought and culture; and we serve the public through learning, discovery, and engagement.

In accordance with this mission, the mission of undergraduate education at Utah State University is to help students develop intellectually, personally, and culturally, so that they may serve the people of Utah, the nation, and the world. USU prepares citizen-scholars who participate and lead in local, regional, national, and global communities. University Studies is an integral part of every student’s experience—in both lower-division and upper-division courses. A solid University Studies foundation, combined with concentrated study in a major discipline and interdisciplinary studies, provides the breadth and depth of knowledge qualifying USU graduates as educated citizens.

The University Studies program is intended to help students learn how to learn—not just for the present, but also for the future. No individual can master all, or even a small portion, of society’s knowledge, but students can learn the basic patterns used to obtain and organize information, enabling them to discover or recover knowledge. University Studies involves a series of interrelated educational experiences which stimulate and assist students in becoming self-reliant scholars and individuals. The ultimate objective is for general and discipline-specific education to complement each other in helping students to:

1. understand processes of acquiring knowledge and information;
2. reason logically, critically, creatively, and independently, and be able to address problems in a broad context;
3. recognize different ways of thinking, creating, expressing, and communicating through a variety of media;
4. understand diversity in value systems and cultures in an interdependent world; and
5. develop a capacity for self-assessment and lifelong learning.

By introducing ideas and issues in human thought and experience, University Studies courses help students achieve the intellectual integration and awareness needed to meet the challenges they will face in their personal, social, and professional lives. University Studies courses emphasize how knowledge is achieved and applied in different domains. Collectively, they provide a foundation and perspective for:

1. understanding the nature, history, and methods of the arts and humanities, as well as the natural and physical sciences;
2. understanding the cultural, historical, and natural contexts shaping the human experience; and
3. interpreting the important cultural, socio-economic, scientific, and technological issues of the diverse global community in which we live.

A university education prepares students to work and live meaningfully in today’s rapidly changing global society. Together, general and discipline-specific education help students master the essential competencies making this goal possible. These competencies include:

1. reading, listening, and viewing for comprehension;
2. communicating effectively for various purposes and audiences;
3. understanding and applying mathematics and other quantitative reasoning techniques;
4. using various technologies competently; and
5. working effectively, both collaboratively and individually