

WELLNESS LITERACY

RATIONALE

The status of wellness is one of the most important determinants of quality of life. Having high-level wellness includes these elements: 1) health as a positive state, 2) health in all dimensions (physical, intellectual, social, emotional, environmental, and spiritual), and 3) wellness as an instrumental value (helping one achieve other goals). **Health or Wellness Literacy** is the capacity to obtain, process and understand basic health information and services needed to make appropriate health decisions (adapted from US Department of Health and Human Services). The person who is wellness literate has a strong foundation in science-based health and fitness concepts, selects reliable sources of health and wellness content, and applies skills to live a healthy life.

COURSE GUIDELINES

A wellness course should minimally provide the opportunity for students to:

1. Assess personal and family history to determine individual health risk.
2. Develop a plan for personal wellness to address specific health concerns.
3. Demonstrate appropriate skills to maintain and/or improve one's condition of wellness.

Wellness courses are also encouraged to assist students to:

4. Identify potential barriers to wellness that the student will encounter after leaving ASU and develop a plan to overcome those barriers and enhance their quality of life.
5. Identify social and cultural influences that impact health on both a personal and global scale.

A VERTICAL MODEL FOR WELLNESS LITERACY

Application, analysis, and evaluation of knowledge and behavior can best be achieved by drawing from several different disciplines and experiential settings. Wellness literacy must be developed over time for knowledge and/or skills to become habits and affect quality of life. Wellness faculty will encourage wellness literacy among students by working with the following vertical model in mind.

1. All first year students will select 2 – 3 hours in wellness.
2. Students may have the opportunity to select an additional course in the sophomore year as part of one of the four thematic perspectives. Self assessment would continue as in the first course.
3. Throughout the college experience appropriate wellness behavior will be reinforced through programs available to students delivered by faculty and/or staff in the wellness area. Opportunities for reinforcement of knowledge and behavior could include intramural activities, varsity sports, peer health education, club sports, campus fitness programs, health-related service learning, or residence hall education.
4. In the first wellness course a guided e-journal will be evaluated by instructors in the health and wellness area. This journal could be continued into the sophomore year as part of a wellness course in a thematic cluster and/or the sophomore writing seminar. Analysis could be for knowledge of content and/or improvement of writing skills.
5. It is suggested that the wellness level (health habits, behaviors, and perceptions) of the student population be assessed biennially and suggestions for improvement be considered.

Objectives to meet wellness literacy have been suggested within each of the four educational goals and learning outcomes.

GENERAL EDUCATION OBJECTIVES FOR WELLNESS LITERACY

First level objectives will be to examine and recognize common factors of health and the causes of morbidity, mortality, and injury. At the next level, students will demonstrate an understanding by applying knowledge and skills previously learned. The highest level objectives will focus on analysis and evaluation of wellness in the social/cultural context, as students take responsibility for personal/community quality of life and related prevention skills, ultimately making local to global connections.

I. Thinking critically and creatively -- Students will:

- A. Recognize, differentiate, and effectively employ appropriate and increasingly sophisticated strategies to collect and interpret **Wellness** information, **using quantitative and qualitative measures.**
- B. Successfully integrate disparate **Wellness** concepts and information when interpreting, evaluating, and making decisions; **(as related to lifestyle, habits of consciousness, knowledge of choices, and using informed and safe skills)**
- C. Examine and evaluate ways their own personal, historical and cultural **Wellness** perspectives affect the discovery and generation of knowledge;
- E. **Recognize that Wellness literacy draws upon multiple** disciplines and **methods of learning** to connect as well as differentiate theories from different domains of knowledge.

II. Communicating effectively – Students will:

- A. Use verbal and non-verbal communication, articulate and comprehend **effective mind-body connections related to Wellness and quality of life.**
- F. Know, apply, and communicate college-level **Wellness** concepts and methods.

III. Making local to global connections – Students will:

- A. Analyze past and present relationships between **Wellness / Health** in humans and the natural and physical environment;
- B. Evaluate **Wellness and Public Health issues as related to** community, natural, and global change through the lens of sustainability;
- C. Demonstrate the ability to think critically and creatively about the relationship between local and regional **Wellness** and global issues, processes, trends and systems;
- D. Demonstrate knowledge of contemporary issues **in Wellness** related to cultural diversity in the United States and other areas of the world;
- E. Employ appropriate and increasingly sophisticated means for communicating **Wellness literacy** with people of other cultures.

IV. Understanding responsibilities of community membership – Students will:

- A. Identify potential consequences that personal choices as well as political, economic, and other social forces may have on individual, societal, and environmental health; **(Wellness literacy will enable the student to connect personal wellness to family wellness which contributes to community, societal, and cultural health)**
- D. Apply principles of responsible community membership within and beyond the campus community.

Encourage wellness in residence education, service learning, peer health education; participation in campus fitness programs; and/or involvement in Varsity / club / intramural sports.