

# Building Connections

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# Exploring Perspectives

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# Building Connections: The Big Picture





# GE Curriculum

## Entry Courses



Intro to GE Experience  
1 unit



Foundations  
9 units (variable)

## Core Courses



Exploring Perspectives  
12 units



Building Connections  
9 units

## Exit Course



Portfolio  
1 unit



# Centering Perspective-Taking

**FROM**

Requirement

Prescribed

Disciplinary Knowledge

Academic

**From *what we know***

**TO**

Relevance

Customizable

Perspective-Taking

Contextual

***How we think, know, & do***



# The BC Student Learning Outcome

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By the end of this course, students will be able to ...

Demonstrate the ability to **utilize multiple perspectives** and **make meaningful connections across disciplines and social positions**, think conceptually and critically, and solve problems.

**Note:** EVERY Building Connections course shares this Student Learning Outcome!



# Why Multi-Perspective-Taking?

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- ❖ **Complex Challenges & Issues**

(Climate Change, Water, Displaced Peoples, Death, ... )

- ❖ **Value and Limits of Different Approaches / Disciplines**

(What can and can't a perspective tell us?)

- ❖ **Practice & Guidance in Reconciling Complexities**

(What do you do with competing interests or information?)

# Practicing Multi-Perspective-Taking





# Perspectives = How **People** Think and Act

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## ❖ **Academic / Scholarly / Disciplinary Perspectives**

- Astronomer, Sociologist, Linguist, Composer, Paleontologist, Economist, Religious Studies Scholar, Dancer, Botanist, Historian, Classicist, Painter, Chemist, Gender Scholar, Psychologist ...
- Note: you are NOT limited to the four Exploring Perspectives categories!

## ❖ **Professional Perspectives**

- Small Business Owner, Lawyer, Journalist, Educator, Marketer, Public Health Officer, Data Analyst, Quantitative Researcher, Architect

## ❖ **Social Positions**

- Arizonan, Indigenous Person, Activist, Community Member, Borderlands Resident, Member of Marginalized/Minoritized Groups, Consumer

## ❖ **Keys:**

- Not (necessarily) rooted in the students' experience
- Coherent ways of thinking/knowing/doing





# Perspective-Taking on the Ground: Thinking & Tools

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## What kinds of questions do students ask and answer in the course?

Who has power in this society and how did they come to power?  
How do we harness chemical energy?  
How does this culture understand human sexuality?  
How do commercial specifications effect an artistic work?

**Whose THINKING do students use?**

## What Tools, Methods, and Approaches do students use in the course?

Perform a close reading or critical analysis of a text  
Collect and evaluate data or experimental evidence  
Practice an artistic skill and reflect on that practice  
Perform interviews to collect data on beliefs

**Whose TOOLS and APPROACHES do students use?**



# Implementing Multi-Perspective Taking

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- ❖ How will students **distinguish your multiple perspectives?**  
(Make it explicit! Course Organization?)
- ❖ How will students **learn your multiple perspectives?**  
(Instructor Expertise? Guest Lectures? Course Readings / Videos? )
- ❖ How will students **practice your multiple perspectives?**  
(What assignments let students practice thinking and doing like a ....)
- ❖ How will students **connect your multiple perspectives?**  
When and how will students put the multiple strands together to gain greater knowledge?

# Exploring Perspectives: The Big Picture





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1 unit



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9 units (variable)

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Exploring Perspectives  
12 units



Building Connections  
9 units

## Exit Course



Portfolio  
1 unit



\*Core Courses carry attributes



# Exploring Perspectives

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*These courses introduce students to ways of thinking, reasoning, and doing from the perspective of different disciplinary domains.*

- Artist
  - Humanist
  - Social Scientist
  - Natural Scientist
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- ❖ Leans heavily on disciplinary expertise, methodologies, approaches, and tools.
  - ❖ Students should experience direct engagement with the practices of these disciplines.



# Centering Perspective-Taking

**FROM**

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**TO**

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Customizable

Perspective-Taking

Contextual

***How we think, know, & do***



**and Why**





# Overarching Goals of Exploring Perspectives

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- ❖ Practice disciplinary perspective-taking (within a framework of disciplinary knowledge/content).
- ❖ Explore and practice the varied approaches (ways of questioning/reasoning/doing) of the artist, humanist, social scientist, and natural scientist.
- ❖ Practice skills related to the creation, analysis, and communication of knowledge and works within disciplinary areas.
- ❖ Help students envision themselves as members of the **diverse** communities of people who make up artists/humanists/social scientists/natural scientists.



# Required Learning Outcome for all EP Courses

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**By the end of the course, students will be able**

**to:**

Identify the approaches and methodologies of the disciplinary perspective, use evidence and/or knowledge generated from within the disciplinary perspective to critically analyze questions, ideas, and/or arguments, and describe contributions of the perspective to finding solutions to local and/or global challenges.

Unique course objectives that incorporate specific content, activities, and contexts will map onto and facilitate this learning outcome.





# Practical Steps for Reframing

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- ❖ Consider posing questions instead of listing topics on your syllabus
- ❖ Capitalizing on the strengths of your course
- ❖ Promote student thinking about contextualization within their personal, professional, and campus community lives.
- ❖ In your discipline,
  - What are some of the overarching values which shape your field?  
What are the major questions or problems that your field is trying to solve/explore/describe?
  - What are the methodologies and/or approaches people use in your field?
  - How do students explore these questions, values, and/or practice methodologies?



# Perspective-Taking on the Ground: Thinking & Tools

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## What kinds of questions do students ask and answer in the course?

Was there ever life on Mars? Is there now?  
Why did the dinosaurs go extinct?  
Are there Earth-like planets around other stars?  
How do we know Earth is not flat?

**Whose THINKING do students use?**

## What Tools, Methods, and Approaches do students use in the course?

Practice a scientist's techniques and reflect on that practice  
Collect and evaluate data or experimental evidence  
Use writing and speaking to communicate methods and findings

**Whose TOOLS and APPROACHES do students use?**



# Reflection Questions for Reframing into EP

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- ❖ **Course Objectives** are the map - they are what students will do to embody or immerse themselves in the perspective
  - What are you asking students to **do or explore** in your course?
- ❖ **Learning Outcomes** are the destination - what students will be able to do to demonstrate how they have engaged with the perspective taking
  - What opportunities do students have to **make their learning visible**?
  
- ❖ What teaching strategies are you already using that allow student to engage with perspective taking in your field?
- ❖ Are there innovative ways to provide varied, complex, and higher-order learning experiences for your students?

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