

Taylor University

## Pillars at Taylor University

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Milo Rediger Writings & Addresses

Milo Rediger

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### General Education

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## GENERAL EDUCATION - DEFINITION

### What it is not:

General does not mean thin or shallow or average.

It does not mean the level that everybody can achieve.

It is not the concern of the colleges only. (High schools, etc., too.)

### What it is:

General means generous, full, all-round but integrated.

It is an exploratory acquaintance with the main areas of human knowledge.

It is the basis for an intelligent intellectual life.

It is what is needed for an understanding of oneself, interests and abilities.

It is a foundation for a major specialization.

It is basic to an intelligent choice of vocation.

It provides a comprehensive and inter-related framework within which the student can - acknowledge God

- appreciate society
- understand himself

Or -- understand man's struggle with nature, his development as a human being, his social experience, his relation to God and the ultimate values of existence.

It is liberal education -- liberating education!

A general education is fundamental life knowledge.

It should encourage the student to read, to listen, to communicate in writing and orally, to think critically, to experience sympathetically, to work creatively, to find and relate living to universal meaning.



## GENERAL EDUCATION - CONTENT

Divisions represent phases of life, thought and personality:

- Philosophy and Religion
- Natural Science and Mathematics
- Health, Physical Education and Recreation
- Social Sciences and Psychology
- Fine Arts
- Language and Literature

In each division, students are introduced to, and confronted with, problems which involve general principles, events and facts which are important in their knowledge and growth.

An essential part of general education is composed of basic skills and tools -- reading, writing, listening, speaking, use of library and simple mathematics.

Together, the divisions form an inter-related and unified account of human knowledge on the general level.

### MAN IN HIS FULL NATURE

1. Man needs to establish satisfactory relations with the physical and biological orders as the environment within which, as belonging to nature, he must live and grow.

Mathematics, Physics, Chemistry, Biology

2. He needs to learn the nature and functions of his physical body. He must know how to use, conserve, and improve his physical powers in order to promote maximum physical well-being. He must be physically fit for work and play, and thus prepared to live creatively and joyously.

Health, Physical Education, and Recreation

3. Man is a rational being and a person. He must develop in reasoning power, in mental efficiency and in personality as a whole, to the limits of his total capacities.

Education, Psychology and Personality Studies

4. Man lives in society with other human beings. He must understand the nature of society and social institutions in order to live effectively and fruitfully as a person and a citizen.

History, Political Science, Economics, Sociology



5. He must achieve effective forms of thought and communication. He must learn to think, and to express his thoughts in a clear, effective, and pleasing manner through various media.

Language, Literature, Communication, Foreign Language

6. He is surrounded by a world of beauty in nature. He must learn to appreciate and enjoy the beautiful, and to create the beautiful through the arts.

Music, Art, Drama

7. Man strives to understand the ultimate meaning of the universe and the highest values of life. He feels the compulsion of a loyalty above himself and beyond the scope of the merely social order. He is conscious of that "power, not of ourselves, which makes for righteousness." He seeks to find peace with God, his Creator, Father and Friend.

Religion, Philosophy, Ethics



## OBJECTIVES OF GENERAL EDUCATION

1. In terms of knowledge, insight, and understanding, it is desired that the student come -
  - a. To know, understand, and accept himself.
  - b. To direct himself consciously toward goals conceived in harmony with Christian standards.
  - c. To develop a liking for people and to understand them well enough to appreciate them and to work effectively with and for them.
  - d. To know and understand the problems of the family, the community, the nation, and the world.
  - e. To understand the contributions which can be made to effective living and problem-solving from the major philosophies, religion, and ways of behaving.
  - f. To know something of the vast richness of human experience and of the accumulated knowledge of the ages.
  - g. To understand the relationships of the fields of knowledge, such as literature, fine arts, philosophy, religion, and the sciences, and to take a relatively comprehensive and integrated perspective on life and knowledge.
2. In terms of skills and techniques, the student should achieve a degree of proficiency -
  - a. In taking proper care of his appearance and physical health.
  - b. In communicating well in a variety of circumstances.
  - c. In thinking critically, systematically, and coherently, and in applying his knowledge to the problems of life.
  - d. In manifesting social poise and grace.
  - e. In utilizing basic research techniques.
3. In terms of attitudes, interests and appreciations, the student should come to cultivate -
  - a. An open-minded curiosity, an appreciation of and dedication to truth, both revealed and discovered, often bridging across professional and academic disciplines.
  - b. An acceptance of his Christian responsibility as a member of society in terms of personal involvement in social issues.
  - c. A desire to solve the problems which can be solved and an attitude of patience with those he cannot solve.
  - d. An appreciation of beauty and an impulsion to utilize it in creative self-expression.
  - e. An appreciation for cultures other than his own.
  - f. A personal faith in God and relationship with Him.
  - g. A desire to evaluate and guide his life creatively in accordance with the norms of Christian morality.



## GENERAL EDUCATION AT TAYLOR UNIVERSITY

General education at Taylor University is non-specialized education in a Christian interpretation of life that will enable the student to think clearly, communicate well, become familiar with the physical world, and acquire a sense of values that will enable him to live worthily as a contributing citizen in a democratic society.

This aspect of the student's educational experience emphasizes the unity of the personality and stresses behavioral outcomes. These outcomes defy classification, although they would include skills and techniques (bodily coordination, communication, critical thinking, etc.) and attitudes and appreciations (good taste in music, respect for the opinion and rights of others, right morals, and other value judgments, etc.). This involves the acquisition of knowledge, the cultivation of proper motivations, and the development of a comprehensive perspective on life, its meaning and its problems. It becomes the unifying element of a culture and prepares the student for a full and satisfying life as a member of a family, a worker, a citizen, and seeks to develop the individual in terms of his greatest potential, intellectually, emotionally, physically and spiritually.

Its content consists of a core of common knowledge which is basic to the realization of these objectives. This content is perhaps most logically organized in terms of the commonly accepted four-fold disciplinary classification, namely, communication skills, humanities, social science and natural science. Criteria for the selection of subject matter would include: (a) What does the student need for a rich personal life which issues in effective Christian service in whatever occupation or profession he enters? (b) What is most significant in our cultural and Christian heritage? (c) What is the teacher most capable of handling? (d) What will stimulate the student to independent and critical thinking?

The fundamental idea of general education implies a method which must involve the student in the process of problem-solving in and around situations which are as lifelike as possible. Students should participate in setting up goals and understanding certain aims and procedures in working toward those goals. College-community relationships and projects may furnish the best opportunities for the conduct of experiences which provide general education in the true sense. An effort should be made to create an environment and atmosphere in which desirable affective and motor patterns develop simultaneously with intellectual behavior. The program should coordinate classroom activities and interests with those of the campus and local community, and an evaluation of progress toward goals should be made periodically.

For Taylor University, a program of general education may be conceived as two-fold. If the pattern of divisional requirements seems to be too fragmentary, it could be translated into three, four or five unified area courses. However, since coverage of content is not the sole consideration, the personality and perspective of the teacher, as well as instructional methods which involve students in problem-solving processes, should be given equal emphasis.