ALVERNO COLLEGE  
Milwaukee, Wisconsin  

ABILITY-BASED LEARNING PROGRAM

The curriculum is an ability-based, outcome-oriented approach to liberal arts/professional education. To earn a degree at Alverno College a student demonstrates the eight broad abilities listed below, at increasingly complex levels, in general education and in her areas of specialty.

These abilities constitute liberal education at the college and undergird and infuse advanced study in the disciplines and professions. Within the curriculum of a given major, the student develops the abilities according to the distinctive requirements of the disciplines and professions.

Throughout her course of studies, the student participates in performance-based assessments and learns to assess herself. Her progression toward a degree is based upon these assessments, both internal and external.

With demonstrated achievement at each level the student receives one level unit. For a Bachelor's degree, in addition to 32 units awarded when she has demonstrated the first four levels of each of the eight abilities, the student must achieve another 8 units, at least one of them at level 6. Advanced levels of any given ability require more time and effort to achieve than lower ones. For an Associate of Arts degree in General Studies, a student demonstrates her ability at the first four levels in each of the eight areas.

### Abilities and Developmental Levels

1. **Develop communication ability (effectively send and respond to communications for varied audiences and purposes)**
   - Level 1 — Identify own strengths and weaknesses as communicator
   - Level 2 — Show analytic approach to effective communicating
   - Level 3 — Communicate effectively
   - Level 4 — Communicate effectively making relationships out of explicit frameworks from at least three major areas of knowledge
   - In majors and areas of specialization:
     - Level 5 — Communicate effectively, with application of communications theory
     - Level 6 — Communicate with habitual effectiveness and application of theory, through coordinated use of different media that represent contemporary technological advancement in the communications field

2. **Develop analytical capabilities**
   - Level 1 — Show observational skills
   - Level 2 — Draw reasonable inferences from observations
   - Level 3 — Perceive and make relationships
   - Level 4 — Analyze structure and organization
   - In majors and areas of specialization:
     - Level 5 — Establish ability to employ frameworks from area of concentration or support area discipline in order to analyze
     - Level 6 — Master ability to employ independently the frameworks from area of concentration or support area discipline in order to analyze

3. **Develop workable problem-solving skill**
   - Level 1 — Articulate and evaluate own problem-solving process
   - Level 2 — Define problems or design strategies to solve problems using discipline-related frameworks
   - Level 3 — Select or design appropriate frameworks and strategies to solve problems
   - Level 4 — Implement a solution and evaluate the problem-solving process used
   - In majors and areas of specialization:
     - Level 5 — Design and implement a process for resolving a problem which requires collaboration with others
     - Level 6 — Demonstrate facility in solving problems in a variety of situations
4 Develop facility in making value judgments and independent decisions
   Level 1 — Identify own values
   Level 2 — Infer and analyze values in artistic and humanistic works
   Level 3 — Relate values to scientific and technological developments
   Level 4 — Engage in valuing in decision-making in multiple contexts
   In majors and areas of specialization:
   Level 5 — Analyze and formulate the value foundation/framework of a specific area of knowledge, in its theory and practice
   Level 6 — Apply own theory of value and the value foundation of an area of knowledge in a professional context

5 Develop facility for social interaction
   Level 1 — Identify own interaction behaviors utilized in a group problem-solving situation
   Level 2 — Analyze behavior of others within two theoretical frameworks
   Level 3 — Evaluate behavior of self within two theoretical frameworks
   Level 4 — Demonstrate effective social interaction behavior in a variety of situations and circumstances
   In majors and areas of specialization:
   Level 5 — Demonstrate effective interpersonal and intergroup behaviors in cross-cultural interactions
   Level 6 — Facilitate effective interpersonal and intergroup relationships in one's professional situation

6 Develop global perspectives
   Level 1 — Assess own knowledge and skills to think about and act on global concerns
   Level 2 — Analyze global issues from multiple perspectives
   Level 3 — Articulate understanding of interconnected local and global issues
   Level 4 — Apply frameworks in formulating a response to global concerns and local issues
   In majors and areas of specialization:
   Level 5 — Generate theoretical and pragmatic approaches to global problems, within a disciplinary or professional context
   Level 6 — Develop responsibility toward the global environment in others

7 Develop effective citizenship
   Level 1 — Assess own knowledge and skills in thinking about and acting on local issues
   Level 2 — Analyze community issues and develop strategies for informed response
   Level 3 — Evaluate personal and organizational characteristics, skills and strategies that facilitate accomplishment of mutual goals
   Level 4 — Apply her developing citizenship skills in a community setting
   In majors and areas of specialization:
   Level 5 — Show ability to plan for effective change in social or professional areas
   Level 6 — Exercise leadership in addressing social or professional issues

8 Develop aesthetic responsiveness: involvement with the arts
   Level 1 — Articulate a personal response to various works of art
   Level 2 — Explain how personal and formal factors shape own responses to works of art
   Level 3 — Connect art and own responses to art to broader contexts
   Level 4 — Take a position on the merits of specific artistic works and reconsider own judgments about specific works as knowledge and experience change
   In majors and areas of specialization:
   Level 5 — Choose and discuss artistic works which reflect personal vision of what it means to be human
   Level 6 — Demonstrate the impact of the arts on your own life to this point and project their role in personal future