

WORKING DRAFT: members of the UW community are welcome to provide feedback to help refine this draft at edtrends@uw.edu

The Husky Experience is a Major...and More

Being a Husky has always meant making a contribution through career and community. In the 21st century, successful Huskies need to be lifelong learners with the vigor and flexibility to tackle new challenges and to help shape a fast-paced world.

For success in their careers and fulfillment in their lives, our students need to gain specialized knowledge, broad skills and the wisdom to chart their own future. **They need a major ...and more.** Our schools and colleges provide the major, but it takes the whole campus working together to help students gain *more*.

This is a big charge, and one we readily embrace. Many Huskies already have great global impact—changing lives, making discoveries, winning honors, bettering communities and the environment. We in the UW community must work together to help all Huskies make the most of the short, yet crucial years, they spend at UW. This really matters; our Huskies need our support and help as they learn and shape their careers and lives.

Strategic Students

We are committed to helping students get the most out of their Husky experience. During their time at the UW, our goal is for our students to grow as self-directed thinkers who can connect and synthesize what they have learned inside and outside the classroom, and communicate those insights with clarity.

Starting early, we ask—and encourage—our students to become purposeful and strategic about their UW education and their future. We help students navigate their personal, academic, civic, and professional choices strategically through guided reflection, focused on:

- **Identity:** Who are you becoming and what will you stand for?
- **Choices:** What will your time and effort at UW be dedicated to?
- **Relationships:** Whom will you meet, what will these people teach you, and what opportunities do you hope will result from these connections?
- **Trajectory:** What are your goals, dreams, and aspirations, and how will you make them real?

A major and more...

We aspire to ensure that all students have a transformative educational experience at the University of Washington, one that helps them discover their passions in life and work, become independent thinkers and citizens, and pursue meaningful and rewarding careers.

A major: We provide all students with deep learning in a field that interests and challenges them. An academic major is the foundation for our students' careers and insights.

And more: What are the knowledge and skills that help students make the best use of their major? All students bring with them different experiences, skills, and knowledge bases to build on, and many paths, as they navigate their UW experience in ways unique to them. Regardless, every graduate leaves with more than they started. There are at least six major (somewhat overlapping) areas for student achievement and engagement. These six areas are ones we aspire to strengthen for all students who engage fully with their Husky Experience:

Lifelong Learning

Every UW graduate will leave the university with the ability to think critically, and to address new problems with creativity, thoughtful analysis, and research. They will develop these skills in challenging classes that require them to read, think, write and research in new and deeper ways; allow them to develop increased expertise in a chosen field; and ask them to demonstrate, integrate and reflect on learning. These are the tools for lifelong learning—which is absolutely crucial for resiliency, reinvention and success:

- Analytical reasoning demonstrated through the ability to do research—defining a problem (or research question); gathering, analyzing and synthesizing information or data to address the problem; and presenting those findings.
- Critical thinking, complex problem-solving, and analysis that can be applied to new ideas in settings with people of diverse perspectives and backgrounds.
- Awareness that a formal Husky education is the foundation for lifelong learning, equipping graduates with the skills to learn independently throughout their lives. (*Cut?*)
- Knowledge of how to learn, including awareness of the process of learning; confidence that they can repeat the process in the future to gain expertise in new areas; and awareness of both formal and informal resources for lifelong learning.
- A sense of curiosity, possibility, and empowerment around seeking and pursuing new opportunities and challenges such as advanced degrees, new careers, new technologies, or new interests.
- Creativity.

Leadership

Every UW graduate will have the skills needed to take on leadership roles in their careers and communities. Our students will know that true leadership is not conferred by job titles or privilege, but by collaborative team work, principled self-awareness, accountability, collegiality, organizational commitment, and a future-oriented, entrepreneurial spirit. As leaders, they will have:

- Confidence in navigating the transition from UW to creative and meaningful engagement within diverse communities and work teams.
- Knowledge of how to find and use their voices in ways that influence the communities and organizations in which they live and work.
- Experience leading and collaborating in team settings as well as an understanding of individual contributions, group dynamics and strategies that help navigate challenges to collaboration.

Career Strategy

To be prepared for post-UW professions, Husky alums will graduate with an understanding of the complexities of the world of work and a strategic approach to pursuing career opportunities (both near- and long-term), including:

- Development of major- or field-specific skills and areas of interest and expertise both in and out of the classroom.
- Experience navigating a complex work environment in which they can contribute by applying general skills—such as being a productive part of a team, meeting deadlines, working independently, flexibility. This can be achieved through on or off-campus experiences such as internships, volunteer work, or jobs.
- Knowledge of successful job search techniques, including:

- *Core elements:* Writing and tailoring a resume to a specific opportunity, how to build and sustain a professional network, and how to conduct an excellent job interview.
- *Direction:* Understanding what types of careers exist and how to explore these options. Identifying resources that explain different careers and their requirements, salaries, and the likelihood of future employment opportunities.
- *Connecting:* Understanding of skills gained through leadership, research, community service, internships, and other co-curricular and curricular experiences at UW.
- *Communicating:* Ability to communicate concisely about talents, strengths, values, transferrable skills, and experiences in ways that align with various industries and career options.
- Social-media savvy and the ability to create professional online identities: (*Merge with “Connecting” above?*)
 - Understanding of how to create an appropriate web presence, as it relates to careers, academics, professional reputation, and future plans.
 - Knowledge of current and appropriate tools for professional networking (e.g. LinkedIn).
- Preparation to navigate culturally diverse environments and an awareness of issues in the workplace for women, people of color, people with disabilities, and LGBTQ colleagues.
- Understanding of the employment implications of choices of study/major.
- Understanding that a graduate must impart the value of the University education to the employer and the particular position and also articulate the field-specific and transferrable skills they bring with them.

Cultural Understanding

Every Husky will graduate with the cultural understanding (local, regional, and global) that will enable them to excel in cross-functional, multicultural environments and engage meaningfully in diverse groups, teams, and communities. Our graduates will respect and understand the complex, dynamic nature of human cultures and interactions on personal, local, and global scales (interpersonal, multicultural, cross-cultural).

Cultural competence encompasses many things, including:

- Understanding of diversity issues in the US.
- Awareness of and a respectful approach to cultural differences and values in the global community.
- Understanding of the issues of diversity, injustice and inequities in societies from a broad philosophical perspective.
- The ability to apply awareness and understanding to real-life situations at home and abroad, in the workplace and in the community.
- Knowledge of how to communicate across cultural boundaries with those who have learned one’s language and the ability to make oneself understood to speakers of at least one language other than one’s own.

Community engagement and public service

All Huskies will have an experience that helps them develop a connection between their academic work and the community; a sense of social responsibility; and the ability to apply the strengths, skills, and talents of a Husky grad in service of a broader community. This may mean serving communities of which the student is a member, building on existing relationships and interests, or exploring new community groups that build new relationships and fostering new interests. Community-based learning includes:

- Discovery of the community in which the university resides, gaining exposure to and participating in a selection of the great variety of organizations and experiences in the city and beyond.
- A sense of social responsibility and understanding of what it means in ethical and practical terms to give back to communities of one's own choosing and use one's skills to help others.

Health & Wellness

College is a time for students to explore who they are as individuals and as members within a community. It is also a stressful time, whether students are exploring new-found independence; returning to school after years of working, raising children, serving in the military; or managing lack of sleep, grades or financial anxiety, illness, depression, or issues related to sexual health. Huskies will tackle relevant issues through:

- Reflection on personally held beliefs, examining them in light of people different from themselves, balancing personal needs with those of others, and enhancing self-respect and mutual respect in ways that build community.
- Discovery of their aptitudes, effectiveness, and healthy habit goals that will carry forward throughout their lives.
- Awareness of the social, emotional, intellectual, physical, financial, and spiritual aspects of wellbeing; how to access campus and community-based resources to navigate challenges to wellbeing; and how to advocate for self and others in ways that improve wellbeing.
- Ability to see beyond their current situation, address personal barriers, identify resources, and challenge roadblocks to success.