

(1) It is common now to have a very short **mission statement**: a statement (or phrase) describing the core purpose that an organization seeks to accomplish. The mission statement is used to help guide decisions about priorities, actions, and responsibilities.

- E.g. Smithsonian: “The increase and diffusion of knowledge.” (6 words)  
*Source:* [http://www.si.edu/Content/Pdf/About/FY2015\\_performance-plan.pdf](http://www.si.edu/Content/Pdf/About/FY2015_performance-plan.pdf)
- E.g. New York Public Library: “To inspire lifelong learning, advance knowledge, and strengthen our communities.” (10 words)  
*Source:* <http://www.nypl.org/help/about-nypl/mission>

(2) An organization with a purpose to be accomplished should have a **strategy** for accomplishing the purpose.

- E.g. the Smithsonian specifies an “Overarching Strategic Framework” with specific “Strategic Priorities.”  
*Source:* [http://www.si.edu/Content/Pdf/About/FY2015\\_performance-plan.pdf](http://www.si.edu/Content/Pdf/About/FY2015_performance-plan.pdf)
- E.g. the New York Public Library breaks its mission into three components, using four to six bullet-points to identify how each component will be achieved.  
*Source:* <http://www.nypl.org/help/about-nypl/mission>

(3) An organization with a purpose to be accomplished and a strategy for accomplishing that purpose should also have **means of measuring success** in accomplishing its purpose.

- E.g. the Smithsonian publishes an annual “Performance Plan” that includes a list of “key performance indicators” for measuring its success.  
*Source:* [http://www.si.edu/Content/Pdf/About/FY2015\\_performance-plan.pdf](http://www.si.edu/Content/Pdf/About/FY2015_performance-plan.pdf)
- E.g. the New York Public Library has published a “Plan of Service” that includes “Evaluation Methods” for measuring its success.  
*Source:* <http://www.nypl.org/help/about/mission/ny-state-plan-service>

*[Note: it is also common to include a “vision statement” that is separate from all of the above, the vision is aspirational and can focus on the long-term.]*

NEASC provides all three for General Education programs.

4.16 The general education requirement is coherent and substantive. It embodies the institution's definition of an educated person and prepares students for the world in which they will live. The requirement informs the design of all general education courses, and provides criteria for its evaluation, including the assessment of what students learn.

4.17 The general education requirement in each undergraduate program ensures adequate breadth for all degree-seeking students by showing a balanced regard for what are traditionally referred to as the arts and humanities, the sciences including mathematics, and the social sciences. General education requirements include offerings that focus on the subject matter and methodologies of these three primary domains of knowledge as well as on their relationships to one another.

CCSU CCSU 4/30/2015 3:02 PM

**Comment [1]:** The second sentence amounts to a mission statement.

CCSU CCSU 5/1/2015 8:17 AM

**Comment [2]:** These are the sorts of things a mission statement is supposed to do. In other words, the third sentence makes it clear that the second sentence is indeed intended to be a mission statement for General Education programs.

CCSU CCSU 4/30/2015 3:04 PM

**Comment [3]:** This word indicates that Article 4.17 is identifying the *strategy* for accomplishing the *mission*.

4.18 The institution ensures that all undergraduate students complete at least the equivalent of forty semester hours in a bachelor's degree program, or the equivalent of twenty semester hours in an associate's degree program in general education.

4.19 Graduates successfully completing an undergraduate program demonstrate competence in written and oral communication in English; the ability for scientific and quantitative reasoning, for critical analysis and logical thinking; and the capability for continuing learning, including the skills of information literacy. They also demonstrate knowledge and understanding of scientific, historical, and social phenomena, and a knowledge and appreciation of the aesthetic and ethical dimensions of humankind.

- Standard 4.16: mission of General Education,
- Standard 4.17: strategy for General Education,
- Standard 4.19: measureable outcomes for General Education.

If this is correct, then we might consider modifying our General Education program by the addition of the following mission, strategy and outcomes statements.

*Mission Statement:* the General Education program embodies CCSU's definition of an educated person and prepares students for the world in which they will live. [22 words; near-verbatim quotation of the first two sentences of 4.16]

*Mission Statement (alt-1):* To ensure that all CCSU undergraduates become educated people, and are prepared for the world in which they will live. [20 words; reformulation as a mission]

*Mission Statement (alt-2):* To ensure that all CCSU undergraduates become well educated people. [10 words; first half of alt-1]

*Mission Statement (alt-3):* To ensure that all CCSU undergraduates are prepared for the world in which they will live. [16 words; second half of alt-1]

*Strategy Statement:* the general education requirement ensures adequate breadth for all degree-seeking students by showing a balanced regard for what are traditionally referred to as the arts and humanities, the natural sciences including mathematics, and the social and behavioral sciences. General education requirements include offerings that focus on the subject matter and methodologies of these three primary domains of knowledge as well as on their relationships to one another. [near-verbatim quotation of 4.17]

*Measurable Learning Outcomes:* students successfully completing the general education program demonstrate competence in written and oral communication in English; the ability for scientific and quantitative reasoning, for critical analysis and logical thinking; and the capability for continuing learning, including the skills of information literacy. They also demonstrate knowledge and understanding of scientific, historical, and social phenomena, and a knowledge and appreciation of the aesthetic and ethical dimensions of humankind. [near-verbatim quotation of 4.19]

CCSU CCSU 4/30/2015 3:05 PM

**Comment [4]:** Article 4.18 is clearly directed to the size of General Education programs, not to mission, strategy or assessment.

CCSU CCSU 4/30/2015 3:06 PM

**Comment [5]:** Article 4.19 is clearly directed to assessment, since it identifies measurable outcomes. In theory, this could be converted into a vision statement.

Don Adams 5/1/2015 8:25 AM

**Comment [6]:** This addition is to avoid what is taken by some to be an insult to the social and behavioral sciences.

Don Adams 5/1/2015 1:03 PM

**Comment [7]:** This addition reflects CCSU's division between Study Area II and Study Area III.