

The Global Awareness Group is a loose affiliation of some 60+ faculty and staff across a wide range of disciplines at the College. We know that you have been gathering statements about general education provision and requirements from departments prior to the discussions later this month, and we would like to take this opportunity of adding our formal statement to the departmental contributions. While our individual voices may be those of minorities within specific departments, across the disciplines we make up a body of teachers larger than any single department, and the breadth of our teaching expertise gives us a special qualification to comment on issues of general education.

First, in order to explain exactly what we understand by the phrase "global awareness," let me reproduce for you the definition, and the vision and mission statements the Global Awareness Group has come up with:

Mission, Vision and Global Awareness Definition

Global Awareness: Global awareness is an appreciation of interconnected world-wide environmental, political, economic, and social relations and their consequences. This appreciation includes recognition of a responsibility to participate in actively shaping those relations and consequences. This responsibility is demonstrated through active and constructive involvement with global issues individually, through our communities, and in concert with people around the world.

Vision: Expansion of a globally aware community at the College of Charleston

Mission: Building upon existing curricular and extracurricular programs and activities toward more global awareness on campus.

Given the statements above, we hope that you will agree with us that global awareness is an absolutely key component of a liberal arts education. We further hope that you will agree with us that it makes perfect sense to insist on a requirement stipulating the taking of at least one course that enhances global awareness as part of our general education curriculum. Without at least minimal exposure to parts of the world where most of mankind lives, we believe that our students could not be said to have gained a proper general education in the liberal arts tradition.

Yours,
Simon Lewis--on behalf of the Global Awareness Group of the College of Charleston