

CRE DESIGNATION AT A GLANCE

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What is CRE?

Creative thinking is students' abilities to **connect ideas in novel ways, take intellectual risks, embrace multiple perspectives, or transform their learning into innovative solutions** for complex challenges. CRE courses emphasize creativity as a primary, assessed learning goal with tangible products, performances, or artifacts.

Four Ways Students Demonstrate Creative Thinking

- **1. Connecting Ideas:** Students synthesize knowledge from multiple sources or disciplines to create new relationships and **original approaches**.
- **2. Taking Risks:** Students explore uncertain outcomes, choose their own approaches, and learn **through experimentation, failure, and iteration**.
- **3. Multiple Perspectives:** Students engage with diverse viewpoints and contradictory ideas to generate comprehensive solutions.
- **4. Innovative Solutions:** Students apply knowledge to complex, authentic problems through **original approaches and potential solutions and products**
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Examples Across Disciplines

Discipline	Example
Chemistry	Students design cooking experiments demonstrating reactions, culminating in a "bake-off" judged on science and taste.
History	Students conduct "historical trials" using primary sources to prosecute/defend controversial figures.
Mathematics	Students create origami-based geometry lessons and field-test them in elementary schools.
Psychology	Students create a campus digital wellness campaign using behavioral principles, measuring behavior change.
Engineering	Students analyze bird wings to design biomimetic devices solving real engineering challenges.

Philosophy

Students run "Ask a Philosopher" pop-up booths engaging the public in ethical dialogues.

Sample Learning Outcomes for CRE Courses

- Students will **synthesize** concepts from [discipline] to generate original solutions to complex problems.
- Students will **create tangible products** that demonstrate innovative application of course concepts.
- Students will **evaluate multiple perspectives** and integrate them into comprehensive approaches.
- Students will **demonstrate intellectual risk-taking** by developing and defending unconventional approaches.

IMPORTANT

Not having CRE designation doesn't mean a course isn't creative or valuable!

Like WAC (Writing Across the Curriculum), CRE identifies courses where creativity is a *primary, assessed focus*. All courses contribute uniquely to student success. This designation helps students find specific creative learning opportunities—it's not a ranking of course quality.

Questions? Contact the Faculty Senate CRE Subcommittee | ashley.pryor@utoledo.edu

Developed by the Faculty Senate Creative Thinking and Innovation Designation Subcommittee

