

Pratt Institute General Education Mission Statement

The mission of Pratt's general education program is to complement studio practice and to ensure breadth, diversity, and depth in the students' education through engagement with the ideas and modes of inquiry of different fields of study. Pratt graduates emerge as creative professionals whose work is informed by a critical understanding of their cultural and physical environment and of the ideas and values that have shaped the world's societies and their own lives and creative work. Based on the belief that creative practice and critical thinking form an integral whole, general education emphasizes development of visual and verbal intelligence; engagement in critical inquiry and analysis; integration of ideas and approaches from different disciplines; appreciation of human differences and multiple perspectives; and reflection on students' responsibilities to themselves, to society, and the environment in the creation of original, innovative work.

General Education Goals

The overarching goal of general education at Pratt is to contribute to the creation of well-informed, well-rounded, creative professionals who engage critically and responsibly with the world. Mainly through exposure to a diversity of fields of study and experiences outside their chosen disciplines, the general education program is designed to help students acquire or develop the following knowledge, competencies, and values.

Knowledge and Approaches to Knowledge

By the time they graduate, Pratt students will be able to demonstrate:

- Foundational knowledge in the major areas of human thought and accomplishment: an understanding of the issues, questions, conflicts, concepts, and modes of inquiry of the arts, design, architecture, the social sciences, the humanities, and the sciences;
- knowledge of the history of ideas and values as well as contemporary thought and developments that shape the world's societies, our cultures, and the students' lives and creative practice;
- a critical understanding of verbal and visual cultural products in this society as well as in others from a multiplicity of perspectives, including western/non-western, and global/local;
- comprehension of the interrelationships among disciplinary bodies of knowledge, of the interdependence among disciplines, and of the coherence among ways of knowing.

Intellectual, Artistic, and Other Proficiencies

By the time they graduate, Pratt students will be able to exhibit:

- visual and textual literacy defined as the ability to critically read the products of visual and verbal culture. Students develop and refine the ability to articulate a critique of their own work as well as that of others;
- the ability to engage in critical, independent, thinking defined broadly to include:
 - posing questions and problems;
 - making and testing hypotheses;
 - gathering and critically evaluating evidence and arguments from various sources;
 - organizing, synthesizing, and applying information to arrive at well-reasoned conclusions and solutions; and using knowledge and understanding to raise and explore new questions;
- the ability to think creatively, to use one's talents and vision to generate innovative ideas and/or solutions; understand and employ poetic, metaphorical and figurative speech, thought and representation;
- the ability to effectively express ideas, facts, arguments, and opinions using written, oral, visual, and other formats;
- the ability to make effective and ethical use of information resources and do research: locating, evaluating, and organizing, information and using it in the creation of one's own work;
- effective use of quantitative, computer, and other technical skills;
- experience in working effectively on teams to collaboratively solve problems.

Values

By the time they graduate, Pratt students will be able to show:

- commitment to free inquiry and intellectual and artistic discovery;
- an understanding and appreciation of creativity for its own sake and as an agent of change;
- an understanding of the impact of human activities on the natural environment and a commitment to sustainability;
- an understanding of human differences and diverse viewpoints based on ethnicity, race, social class, gender, and sexual identity, as well as respect for the differences among cultural and geographical perspectives;
- the ability to relate to others, to one's work, and to the world at large in a thoughtful and responsible fashion by reflecting on one's responsibilities to oneself and to society, and by making choices based on ethical considerations.