

Approval Criteria for General Education Courses by Distribution Area
(Approved by the Faculty Senate, Feb. 7, 2012)

Approval Criteria for First Year Writing

The primary purpose of the course is to teach academic writing.

To receive general education credit in first year writing, a course must:

- 1) Require that students generate a minimum of 20 pages of graded writing.
- 2) Require that formal writing make up at least 50% of the course grade.
- 3) Assign formal papers requiring students to construct persuasive arguments, analyze the arguments of others, and incorporate research material that includes persuasive evidence from experts.
- 4) Require that students analyze and evaluate numerous examples of academic writing, conduct library research, and incorporate academic research materials in their papers.
- 5) Provide several opportunities for individualized feedback by the instructor and revision by the student.
- 6) Have a course size of no more than 20 students.

Approval Criteria for Foreign Languages

The primary purpose of the course is to learn a language other than English.

To receive general education credit in foreign languages, a course must:

- 1) Require that students learn how to read, write, and understand languages other than English.
- 2) Require that students use languages other than English to learn about the perspectives of historical and/or modern cultures that can be obtained only through the language.

Approval Criteria for Humanities

The primary purpose of the course is the examination of particular expressions of human culture in their social, historical, intellectual, aesthetic, or ethical dimensions

To receive general education credit in humanities, a course must:

- 1) Analyze how ideas are represented, interpreted, or valued in these cultural expressions.
- 2) Examine relevant primary source materials as understood by the appropriate discipline(s).
- 3) Require students to interpret the material in writing assignments (or alternatives that require equally coherent and sustained analysis).

Approval Criteria for Math/Logic

The primary purpose of courses in Mathematics or Logic is the modeling of phenomena in mathematical terms.

To receive general education credit for Mathematics and/or Logic, a course must:

- 1) Have as its primary purpose the modeling of phenomena in mathematical terms.
- 2) Study the theory supporting the modeling at a level of abstraction sufficient to deduce results about the mathematical objects (such as sets, probability distributions, graphs, algorithms, formal languages, functions, etc.) arising from the theory.
- 3) Expand the students' knowledge of mathematics beyond what is required by MATH 101 and any of the course's prerequisites.

Approval Criteria for Natural Science

The primary purpose of the course is the study of fundamental principles of natural or physical science.

To receive general education credit in natural science, a course must:

- 1) Provide experience in the practice of science as a part of a coordinated 2-course sequence, both with accompanying labs to provide appropriate depth.
- 2) Apply physical/natural principles to analyze and solve problems.
- 3) Be in a 2-course sequence that provides an appreciation for the impact science has on society.

Approval Criteria for Social Science

The primary purpose of the course is to provide explanations for human behavior, social interaction, and/or social institutions.

To receive general education credit in social science, a course must:

- 1) Provide a survey of a particular social science discipline or demonstrate ways in which the (more narrowly focused) material being covered in the course connects to other areas in the social sciences more generally.
- 2) Expose students to empirical evidence and the varieties of social scientific methods of inquiry.
- 3) Examine the impact the social sciences have on society.

Approval Criteria for History

Pre-Modern History:

The primary purpose of the course is to develop knowledge of the history of human civilizations, societies, and cultures in the pre-modern era.

To receive general education credit in pre-modern history, a course must:

- 1) Develop knowledge of the history of human civilizations, societies, and cultures and an awareness of the historical experience through the study of the political, social, cultural, and intellectual aspects of the pre-modern era.
- 2) Require that students situate primary historical records in their contexts and use these sources to construct historical arguments.
- 3) Cover substantial historical developments and periods within the pre-modern period, rather than only specific episodes.

Modern History

The primary purpose of the course is to develop knowledge of the history of human civilizations, societies, and cultures in the modern period.

To receive general education credit in modern history, a course must:

- 1) Develop knowledge of the history of human civilizations, societies, and cultures and an awareness of the historical experience through the study of the political, social, cultural, and intellectual aspects of the modern era.
- 2) Require that students situate primary historical records in their contexts and use these sources to construct historical arguments.
- 3) Cover substantial historical developments and periods within the modern period, rather than only specific episodes.

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