

# General Education Accreditation of Off-Campus Work: Policies and Procedures

**A document of the General Education Committee  
revised 10/15/03 by action of the Committee**

The purpose of this document is to describe the process by which off-campus work will be accredited for general education and the standards that will be applied in making such accreditation decisions. This policy applies only to new, first-year college students enrolled at St. Olaf beginning Fall 1994; a separate policy has been prepared for transfer students.

## I. DEFINITIONS

Off-campus work includes the following:

### A. Credit earned through work completed prior to entering St. Olaf:

1. **Advanced Placement (AP)** - Credit students receive through qualifying scores on College Board Advanced Placement examinations. Qualifying scores are determined by the Office of the Registrar in consultation with relevant departments, and vary from discipline to discipline.
2. **International Baccalaureate (IB)** - Credit students receive through scores of 4 through 7 on IB exams (higher-level exams only)
3. **Other college-level course work** - Credit students receive through completing courses at other colleges or universities prior to entering St. Olaf, often under the auspices of various Post-Secondary Enrollment Options (PSEO) programs. In addition, course work transcribed by a college or university completed through a College in the Schools program can be evaluated for transfer credit.

### B. Credit earned through transfer work: Credit students receive through completing individual courses at other colleges or universities during regular academic terms or summer sessions.

### C. Credit earned through work completed on St. Olaf off-campus programs:

1. **Faculty-led interim courses** - Credit students receive through completing domestic or international off-campus courses offered during interim by St. Olaf faculty
2. **Faculty-led international programs** - Credit students receive through participation in Term in the Middle East, Term in Asia, Environmental Studies in Australia, and the Global Semester. This credit derives from two types of instruction:
  - (a) **The St. Olaf faculty field supervisors' courses**
  - (b) **Courses offered by non-St. Olaf instructors affiliated with the programs**
3. **Other St. Olaf-approved off-campus programs unaccompanied by St. Olaf faculty -**

These include a variety of academic and field-based programs offered within the United States and abroad under the auspices of sponsoring organizations or institutions with which St. Olaf has a formal relationship (for example, ACM, HECUA, Manchester College, East China Normal University, Curtin University, etc.). Such programs are listed annually in the St. Olaf Off-Campus Studies brochure published by International and Off-Campus Studies.

- D. **Credit earned through inter-registered course work:** Courses taken through inter-registration provisions with Carleton or on interim exchange programs are included in this category.

## II. GENERAL POLICIES

- A. Courses taken by St. Olaf students off-campus, at the appropriate level and worth the equivalent of three semester credits or four quarter credits, may earn general education (GE) credit on the basis of *disciplinary equivalents to general education requirements*.
- B. The amount of GE credit a student may earn will depend on the source of the work being accredited, that is, whether it was earned through work completed prior to enrollment at St. Olaf, work completed on a faculty-led international program, work completed at another university, etc.
- C. At least one of the two courses in each of the following General Education requirement categories must be taken from a St. Olaf faculty instructor:
1. Historical Studies in Western Culture
  2. Studies in Human Behavior and Society
  3. Studies in Natural Science

The exception to this provision is for credits earned through participation in a St. Olaf faculty-led international program. On these programs, students may fulfill more than one requirement in each GE category. In all cases, students must still observe relevant requirements that courses must be in different departments or interdisciplinary programs or fields of study.

- D. Double-counting for off-campus courses instructed by non-St. Olaf faculty is permitted only for the following types of courses:
1. Courses appropriate to the Writing in Context requirement (WRI)
  2. Courses appropriate to the Multicultural Studies Global Course requirement (MCS-G) or Domestic Component requirement (MCS-D)

Such courses may meet one other GE requirement if they meet the relevant guidelines outlined in Section III below.

- E. With the approval of the relevant department chair or program adviser, off-campus courses may meet both a GE and a major or concentration requirement.

## III. GUIDELINES FOR DISCIPLINARY EQUIVALENTS

A. **Foundation Courses:**

1. **Writing**
  - (a) **First Year Writing (FYW)** - A college-level writing course that meets the approval of the Director of Writing
  - (b) **Writing in Context (WRI)** - A course with sustained writing that is an integral part of an academic course in any discipline
2. **Foreign Language (FOL)** - A foreign language course at the level specified in the GE requirement
3. **Oral Communication (ORC)** - A speech-communication course
4. **Mathematical Reasoning (MAR)** - A mathematics course
5. **Physical Activity (PHA)** - A structured physical activity involving (a) a minimum of 26 hours of instructional contact time with a qualified instructor, and (b) a formal evaluation procedure

B. **Core Courses:**

1. **Historical Studies in Western Culture (HWC)** - A course in western history or a historically-oriented course in any branch of western civilization or culture
2. **Multicultural Studies**
  - (a) **Global Course (MCS-G)** - A course in any discipline focusing upon one or more non-western civilizations or cultures
  - (b) **Domestic Component (MCS-D)** - A course in any discipline focusing upon cultural diversity within the US as defined on the basis of race, ethnicity or gender
3. **Artistic and Literary Studies**
  - (a) **Artistic Studies (ALS-A)** - A course in one or more of the following areas: visual art; music; film; theater in performance; dance
  - (b) **Literary Studies (ALS-L)** - A literature course in any language
4. **Biblical and Theological Studies**
  - (a) **Biblical Studies (BTS-B)** - A course in the critical interpretation of the Bible
  - (b) **Theological Studies (BTS-T)** - A course in Christian theology

5. **Studies in Natural Science (NST, NSL)** - A course in any of the following areas: astronomy; biology; chemistry; geology; physics. Courses without a lab requirement will receive NST credit; courses with a lab requirement will receive NSL credit.
6. **Studies in Human Behavior and Society (HBS)** - A course in any of the following areas: anthropology; economics; political science; psychology; sociology

**C. Integrative Course:**

1. **Ethical Issues and Normative Perspectives (EIN)** - This requirement may be met by an upper level college course in ethics that meets the published EIN guidelines.

#### **IV. CREDIT LIMITS**

**A. Credit earned through work completed prior to entering St. Olaf:**

The College accepts up to five (5) course credits from all sources of college-level work completed prior to entering St. Olaf. Four (4) of these five credits may be used to fulfill GE requirements, but with no double-counting.

**B. Credit earned through transfer work:**

After a new college student matriculates at St. Olaf, only four (4) courses from other colleges or universities may subsequently be transferred to St. Olaf for degree credit, and only two (2) of the four courses may count toward General Education requirements, with no double-counting. Course credits earned through inter-registration provisions (see IV.D. below) are excluded from these restrictions.

**C. Credit earned through work completed on St. Olaf off-campus programs:**

1. **Faculty-led interim courses:** These courses are reviewed by the GEC in the same way as are on-campus courses. As a result, faculty-led interim courses are not subject to GE credit limits.
2. **Faculty-led international programs:**
  - (a) **The St. Olaf faculty field supervisors' courses:** Like faculty-led interim courses, such courses are reviewed by the GEC in the same way as are on-campus courses. As a result, field supervisors' courses are not subject to GE credit limits.
  - (b) **Courses offered by non-St. Olaf instructors affiliated with the programs:** The amount of GE credit students may earn through such work depends on the content of the courses and the duration of the program.
    - (1) Courses taught by non-St. Olaf instructors on semester-length programs may meet up to four (4) GE requirements, distributed as follows: Credit toward the Multicultural Studies Course requirement (MCS-G), if appropriate; credit toward the Writing in Context requirement (WRI), if appropriate; and no more than two (2) additional GE requirements within the parameters specified in Section III above.

Double-counting of individual courses is permitted only when one of the double-counted requirements is the Multicultural Studies Course requirement (MCS-G) and/or the Writing in Context requirement (WRI).

- (2) Courses taught by non-St. Olaf instructors on semester-plus-interim-length programs may meet up to five (5) GE requirements, distributed as follows: Credit toward the Multicultural Studies Course requirement (MCS-G), if appropriate; credit toward the Writing in Context requirement (WRI), if appropriate; and no more than three (3) additional GE requirements within the parameters specified in Section III above. Double-counting of individual courses is permitted only when one of the double-counted requirements is the Multicultural Studies Course requirement (MCS-G) and/or the Writing in Context requirement (WRI).

3. **Other St. Olaf-approved off-campus programs unaccompanied by St. Olaf faculty:**

(a) The amount of GE credit students may earn on such programs depends on the content of their courses and the duration of each program.

(1) Semester-long programs may meet up to five (5) GE requirements, distributed as follows: Credit toward the Multicultural Studies Course or Component requirement (MCS-G or MCS-D), if appropriate; credit toward the Writing in Context (WRI) requirement, if appropriate; and no more than three (3) other GE requirements within the parameters specified in Section III above.

(2) Semester-plus-interim-length programs may meet up to six (6) GE requirements, distributed as follows: Credit toward the Multicultural Studies Course or Component requirement (MCS-G or MCS-D), if appropriate; credit toward the Writing in Context (WRI) requirement, if appropriate; and no more than four (4) additional GE requirements within the parameters specified in Section III above.

(3) Year-long programs may meet up to seven (7) GE requirements, distributed as follows: Credit toward the Multicultural Studies Course or Component requirement (MCS-G or MCS-D), if appropriate; credit toward the Writing in Context requirement, if appropriate; and no more than five (5) additional GE requirements within the parameters specified in Section III above.

(b) Double-counting of such courses is permitted only when one of the double-counted requirements is the Multicultural Studies Course requirement (MCS-G), the Multicultural Studies Component requirement (MCS-D), and/or the Writing in Context requirement (WRI).

4. **Unaccompanied off-campus programs not approved by St. Olaf:** The College grants no GE credit for work completed on international programs not approved by St. Olaf.

D. **Credit earned through inter-registered course work:** Courses completed through inter-

registration provisions with Carleton or on interim exchange programs may receive GE credit within the parameters of Section III above and are not subject to credit limits described above.

Double-counting of such courses is permitted only when one of the double-counted

requirements is the Multicultural Studies Course requirement (MCS-G), the Multicultural Studies

Component requirement (MCS-D), or the Writing in Context requirement (WRI).

## V. AUTHORITY AND PROCEDURES FOR GE CREDIT APPROVAL

**A. Credit earned through work completed prior to entering St. Olaf:** The Office of the Registrar will review the results of Advanced Placement examinations, IB exams, PSEO course work, and other work students may submit for St. Olaf GE credit. If the work is accepted for transfer credit, the Office of the Registrar may authorize GE credit if the work falls within the parameters of Sections III and IV above.

**B. Credit earned through transfer work:** After matriculation at St. Olaf, the Office of the Registrar will authorize GE credit for such work within the parameters of Sections III and IV above.

### C. Credit earned through work completed on off-campus programs:

1. **Faculty-led interim courses:** The GEC reviews these courses in the same manner as on-campus courses.

2. **Faculty-led semester international programs:**

(a) **The St. Olaf faculty field supervisors' courses:** The GEC reviews these courses in the same manner as on-campus courses.

(b) **Courses offered by non-St. Olaf instructors affiliated with the program:** The program adviser may authorize GE credit for such work within the parameters of Sections III and IV above. The program adviser will notify *in writing* the Coordinator of Program Advising in International and Off-Campus Studies of the type(s) and level(s) of GE credit to be assigned. Whenever possible, such authorization will be made prior to publication of the annual St. Olaf Off-Campus Studies brochure in which the program is described. In reviewing these courses for GE credit, the program adviser may consult with International and Off-Campus Studies, the faculty field supervisor, non-St. Olaf instructors, the Director of General Education, other members of the GEC, and/or the GEC as a whole.

3. **Other St. Olaf-approved off-campus programs, unaccompanied by St. Olaf faculty:**

(a) The program adviser may authorize GE credit for such work within the parameters of Sections III and IV above. Unless alternative arrangements have been made with the Office of the Registrar and International and Off-Campus Studies, the program adviser will notify *in writing* the Coordinator of Program Advising in International and Off-Campus Studies of the type(s) and level(s) of GE credit to be assigned.

(b) Whenever possible, such authorization will be made prior to the student's participation in the program; however, in many cases students will not know what their off-campus academic program will entail until after their arrival on site. In these cases GE accreditation will take place after the student has received written approval for such credit from the program adviser while on the program, or has completed the program and returned to St. Olaf. Program advisers should apprise students that if they require approval for GE credit upon their return, they should keep syllabi and written work from their off-campus

experience for review by the program adviser.

(c) In reviewing work from unaccompanied off-campus programs, the program adviser may consult with International and Off-Campus Studies, the non-St. Olaf instructors, the Director of General Education, other members of the GEC, and/or the GEC as a whole.

D. **Appeals procedures:** In cases where students believe they should receive a different type or amount of GE credit than what has been authorized through the above procedures, they may appeal the decision to the General Education Committee. An appeal should include documentation of the work the student completed (syllabi, examinations, papers, letters from course instructors, and/or any other relevant supporting materials), and a written explanation of how such work meets the guidelines for the requirement(s) the student wishes the work to fulfill.