

Summary of General Education Requirements

I. FOUNDATION STUDIES

Writing (FYW, WRI): Five courses that develop writing competence and confidence. One course (GE 111 - FYS), taken in the first year, that equips students for effective writing in the liberal arts and introduces writing as a means of learning. Four courses (WRI) that enhance students' writing competence and confidence in a variety of knowledge domains. Courses may be taken in any field and at any level.

Foreign Language (FOL): Three or four courses that develop non-English language skills to an intermediate level, deepen understanding of language as a human phenomenon, and generate insights into a culture other than one's own.

Oral Communication (ORC): A quarter-credit course, or its equivalent incorporated within a full-credit course, that develops oral communication competence and confidence.

Mathematical Reasoning (MAR): A course that develops a student's understanding of mathematics and mathematical problem-solving.

Physical Activity (PHA): Two different quarter-credit courses or one half-credit course providing participation in structured physical activity. Participants in a recognized intercollegiate sport or in a dance company may receive credit for one of the required quarter-credit courses.

II. CORE STUDIES

Historical Studies in Western Culture (HWC): Two courses that develop historical perspective on, and critical appreciation of, the major traditions, institutions, and achievements of Western culture.

Multicultural Studies (MCS-G, MCS-D): Two courses intended to develop understanding and appreciation of cultural diversity. One course (MCS-G) focuses on global diversity, treating cultures outside the western tradition. The second course (MCS-D) includes a component examining domestic diversity, with a focus on race, ethnicity or gender within the United States.

Artistic and Literary Studies (ALS-A, ALS-L): Two courses, one in each sub-area, intended to develop appreciation and understanding of artistic and literary forms in their cultural context.

Biblical and Theological Studies (BTS-B, BTS-T): Two courses, one in each sub-area, that introduce the Biblical tradition and develop a critical and coherent understanding of Christian belief.

Studies in Natural Science (NST-x, NSL): Two courses that develop a student's understanding of scientific knowledge, the process of scientific discovery, and the role of the sciences in society and culture. The two courses taken by a student may not be

in the same department or interdisciplinary program; one of the courses must be a laboratory course; and while courses in a variety of disciplines may satisfy this requirement, at least one of the two must be in biology, chemistry or physics.

Studies in Human Behavior and Society (HBS): Two courses, in two different disciplines, that introduce students to basic concepts, theories, and methods for understanding individual and social human behavior.

III. INTEGRATIVE STUDIES

Ethical Issues and Normative Perspectives (EIN): An upper level course that analyzes ethical issues from a variety of moral and theological perspectives.

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MULTIPLE-COUNTING IN THE GENERAL EDUCATION CURRICULUM

Courses taught by St. Olaf instructors

1. With the exception of the First Year Seminar, courses may satisfy Foundation Studies requirements in conjunction with other General Education requirements.
2. A course may satisfy up to two requirements in different Core Studies areas. A course may not satisfy both requirements in a single Core Study area.
3. Courses that meet the Ethical Issues and Normative Perspectives requirement may not meet any Core Studies requirements, although EIN courses may meet other appropriate General Education requirements.
4. The Interdisciplinary Studies requirement may be fulfilled in conjunction with other GE requirements in Foundation or Core Studies. [By action of the faculty on October 5, 1993, implementation of this requirement has been postponed.]
5. With the exception of the First Year Seminar, courses that have been approved for General Education credit may also, at the discretion of departments or interdisciplinary programs, count for credit in a major or concentration.

Courses taught by non-St. Olaf instructors

1. Multiple-counting of General Education requirements for off-campus courses instructed by non-St. Olaf faculty is permitted only for the following types of courses:
 - a. Courses appropriate to the Course with Writing requirement (WRI)
 - b. Courses appropriate to the Multicultural Studies Course requirement (MCS-G) or Component requirement (MCS-D)

Such courses may meet one other General Education requirement if they meet the relevant guidelines outlined in *General Education Accreditation of Off-Campus Work: Policies and Procedures*.

2. With the approval of the relevant department chair or program adviser, off-campus course work may meet both a General Education and a major or concentration requirement.

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WRITING (FYW, WRI)

Description:

Writing: Five courses that develop writing competence and confidence. This requirement has two parts:

A. First Year Writing (FYW):

Description:

A course (GE 111), taken in the first year, that equips students for effective writing in the liberal arts and introduces writing as a means of learning.

Guidelines:

1. A first year writing course helps students write effective prose for the generally educated reader.
2. A first year writing course gives sustained attention to writing as an ongoing process. Students must write and revise frequently, and must confer at least twice with the instructor during the course of the semester.
3. A first year writing course introduces essential tools for research, including library and internet resources.
4. A first year writing course may include a topical focus.

Comments: (Numbers correlate to numbered guidelines)

1. A first year writing course may be taught from any disciplinary perspective, or from an interdisciplinary or multi-disciplinary perspective. However, it must not be designed as a survey of a discipline or as an introduction to a major or a concentration. It does not emphasize disciplinary writing, which employs distinctive vocabulary, concepts, and intellectual frames of reference, and is based upon an assumption of specialized knowledge shared between writer and reader. Rather, it emphasizes writing addressed to the general reader, which employs no such distinctive language and makes no such assumptions about shared, specialized knowledge.

2. A first year writing course aims at the integration of learning and writing, in part through frequent writing and revision. However, not all of the writing need be of a finished or formal nature. The GEC recommends that instructors allow for a variety of different kinds of writing, both formal and informal-journals, response papers, reports, personal essays, analytic or argumentative papers, creative non-fiction, journalistic or op-ed pieces-whatever best enables the students to write frequently and engage the subject matter of the course most effectively. Though all of the writing might be read by the instructor, and much of it commented upon or discussed, not all of it need be graded. The GEC recommends that students complete at least six finished pieces of writing in a first year writing course.

Reading and other assignments set for a first year writing course must be consistent with the quantity of writing required, and should also be examples of good writing. To meet the demands of reading students' writing and scheduling individual conferences, instructors should feel free to arrange their weekly class meetings in a way that best suits the purposes of the course. This might mean, for instance, occasionally not holding class in order to make time for individual conferences.

3. Among the ways writing can serve as a means of inquiry is through library research. This guideline requires that first year writing courses introduce students to the organization of knowledge and resources, assist them in formulating strategies for research, and lay the foundation for more advanced use of print and electronic research resources in later course work. First year writing courses should also introduce students to the differences between original and derivative knowledge, and to the conventions of distinguishing the two in their writing or discourse (footnotes or endnotes, acknowledgments, works cited, references, etc.). Instructors are encouraged to make use of the library's bibliographic instruction program in meeting these objectives.

4. The subject matter of a first year writing course may be a significant human issue deriving from the disciplinary interests of the instructor, or it may be the process and practice of writing itself. The College's first year writing program will be strongest if it includes instructors from a wide variety of disciplines engaging a wide variety of topics. Examples of previous GE 111 courses include: "Cases of Conscience," "What is the Good of Being Good?" "Life in Motion," "Authority and Freedom in Modern Russia," "Does Liberal Education Have to be Liberal?" "Self, Society, and Advertising," and "Writing the Truth About Ourselves."

Instructors wishing to teach a First Year Writing course are urged to take a faculty development workshop providing a practical introduction to the teaching of writing. These workshops deal with such matters as designing a course, using class time productively, developing a variety of writing assignments, responding to and assessing written assignments, and integrating reading, learning, and writing.

B. Writing in Context (WRI):

Description:

Four courses that enhance students' writing competence and confidence in a variety of knowledge domains. Courses may be taken in any field and at any level.

Guidelines:

1. A Writing in Context course helps students write effective prose in a particular community of knowledge.
2. A Writing in Context course incorporates writing as a principal and integral part of learning.
3. A Writing in Context course must provide instruction in writing and must require students to revise their work in response to instructor feedback.

Comments: (Comments correlate to numbered guidelines)

1. The authority to designate a course as a Writing in Context course lies with the instructor of the course, in consultation with the department chair. Department chairs should notify the Registrar in writing of all departmental courses to be offered for WRI credit, as part of the information they submit for publication in the Class and Lab Schedule. Chairs should also notify the Registrar when an instructor decides to discontinue WRI credit for a course previously designated a Writing in Context course. Chairs may add WRI credit to a course following the submission of Class and Lab Schedule information by notifying the Registrar in writing prior to the beginning of the semester in which a course will be offered. Instructors of Writing in Context courses should provide copies of their course syllabi and sample assignments to their department chairs and to the Director of Writing Across the College.

A Writing in Context course introduces students to the distinctive vocabulary, ways of knowing, writing conventions, etc. of the domain(s) of knowledge represented in the course. The context may be defined by a discipline, an interdisciplinary field of study, or a particular mode of inquiry. This is not to suggest that students should write only for academic audiences in these courses; they may write for one another, experts or professionals in related fields, practitioners, or lay persons with little knowledge of the discipline or subject matter of the course.

2. The writing in WRI courses must be central to student learning in the course. It may be in languages other than English. The GEC is not issuing quantitative or definitional guidelines concerning the amount or kind of writing in a Writing in Context course; rather, instructors themselves may determine the most appropriate writing for their courses. The writing might take one or more of many forms—a term paper, two or three briefer essays, book reviews, a mixture of formal and informal writing, and so forth. Whatever the quantity or mode, the writing should play an integral role in students' engagement with the subject of the course. It should be as much the active means through which learning takes place as it is the register of what has been learned.

3. A Writing in Context course provides explicit instruction in writing. This may take place in a wide variety of forms: through short readings or handouts on effective writing; in individual or small group conferences with students; through class discussion of student writing or the quality of writing in assigned readings; or through lecture. Students must receive instructor feedback on their writing, either orally or in writing, and must be given the opportunity to respond to that feedback through revision of their work. The GEC urges instructors wishing to offer Writing in Context courses to take advantage of faculty development opportunities to improve their skills as teachers of writing and to increase their knowledge of the field and pedagogy of writing instruction.

WRITING IN THE MAJOR

Guidelines:

1. All majors shall require writing of their students and shall be responsible for certifying completion of the requirement.
2. Departments and programs offering majors shall draw up guidelines for their writing requirements and send copies to the GEC.

Comments:

All aspects of this requirement shall be determined by departments and programs that offer majors. These matters include how much and what kinds of writing shall be required.

In considering the requirement it might be helpful if departments and programs asked themselves questions such as the following:

In what kind(s) of writing do we wish our majors to become skilled?

What are the objectives we wish them to attain in their writing?

How much writing do we wish them to complete?

Is there a distinction between the writing we would expect from those enrolled in GE courses we teach and those enrolled in courses in our major?

What of the writing in courses that meet requirements in both General Education and the major?

The GEC will receive individual department and program plans; it will review their implementation and outcome when it comes time to review the GE curriculum in its entirety in several years time.

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FOREIGN LANGUAGE (FOL) (Foundation Studies)

Description:

Foreign Language: This requirement aims to develop language skills, extend understanding of language as a human phenomenon, and generate insights into a culture other than one's own. Students must demonstrate intermediate-level language proficiency by:

- A. Completion of a fourth semester course (or beyond) in French, German, or Spanish;
- B. Completion of a third semester course (or beyond) in Chinese, Greek, Japanese, Latin, Norwegian or Russian;
- C. Proficiency examination; or
- D. Transfer of credit.

Guidelines:

1. Courses develop effective and appropriate communication skills in a language other than one's native language.
2. Courses include the study of authentic texts, which are texts produced by or for native speakers.

3. Courses develop a general awareness of language as a socio-cultural phenomenon and of the subtleties and complexities of language.
4. Courses present information about the cultures of those who use the language.

Comments: (Numbers correlate to numbered guidelines)

I. Courses in foreign language generally emphasize a four-skills approach (speaking, listening, reading, writing), where appropriate, in order to achieve proficiency in the language.

In 1986, the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages adopted guidelines which identify progressive stages of language proficiency in the areas of speaking, listening, reading, and writing. Since the ACTFL guidelines are not based on a particular linguistic theory or pedagogical method, they are a useful tool in the assessment of what the foreign language learner can and cannot do with the language. Although the original ACTFL guidelines applied primarily to the more commonly taught languages (French, German, Spanish), they have recently been adapted to encompass the less commonly taught ones as well.

In the case of Latin and Greek, emphasis is appropriately placed on reading comprehension (the study and interpretation of written texts).

While the departmental statements prepared by each foreign language department at St. Olaf clarify particular goals for the beginning and intermediate language sequence, the GEC guidelines concern primarily the required semester of language.

The GEC encourages interested faculty to consider offering a course in a foreign language which would satisfy the guidelines for the general education requirement.

2. Students are most likely to use the foreign language naturally if they encounter a variety of texts (oral, written, visual) produced by or for native speakers. Topics chosen should reflect significant aspects of the culture under study, especially those related to the question of cultural identity.

3. An important benefit of foreign language study is the potential for an increased awareness and understanding of one's native language.

4. The GEC recommends providing opportunities for students to continue their language study and use beyond the language requirement through participation in the Languages Across the Curriculum program and the International Studies Program.

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ORAL COMMUNICATION (ORC) (Foundation Studies)

Description:

Oral Communication: A course that incorporates specific instruction, practice, and feedback to develop oral communication competence and confidence.

Guidelines:

1. An oral communication course must provide explicit instruction in effective oral communication through assigned readings, lectures, class discussions, and/or other instructional features of the course.
2. An oral communication course must emphasize speaking and listening as principal and integral means of learning. The course must provide several opportunities for students to practice their oral skills in course assignments, and it must provide students with specific feedback on the development of these skills.
3. Oral communication courses may emphasize any of the modes of communication, including presentations, small group debates or discussions, and/or one-on-one communication.

Comments:

1. The process of approving and monitoring the ORC attribute is slightly different from that of most other GE attributes. Instructors who wish to attach the ORC attribute to a course should, upon the first offering of that course with ORC, go through the usual process of proposing the course attribute to the GEC. Upon approval by the GEC the instructor of the course, whether the original proposer of the attribute or a new instructor, is thereafter free to teach the course either with or without the ORC attribute, in consultation with the department chair. Instructors should notify their department chairs of their intention, and the department chairs should in turn notify the registrar in writing as part of the information they submit for publication in the Class and Lab Schedule. The intent of this unique procedure is to enable a course taught at different times by different instructors, as well as multiple sections of a single course taught concurrently, to carry, or not to carry, the ORC attribute, depending on the wishes of the instructors and the needs of the department. Consequently, courses having the same course number may at times be taught with, sometimes without, the ORC attribute.

The oral communication requirement is intended to help students achieve a level of oral communication competence appropriate to the generally educated student. Thus, oral communication instruction should introduce strategies that improve students' effectiveness as speakers and listeners. Instructors may choose the modes of instruction that best support their overall course objectives.

2. Course assignments providing opportunities to practice speaking skills may take a variety of forms: individual presentations; debates; student-led discussions; group presentations; and individual interviews. In order to develop understanding, skill, and confidence, oral communication courses should include a minimum of three opportunities to practice oral skills. While these assignments may vary, in order to emphasize development, they should comprise a coherent sequence.

As in the case with speaking assignments, the means of providing feedback to students may take a variety of forms, such as individual conferences, written comments on assignments, in-class discussion, oral or written peer-evaluation, and self-evaluation.

Courses that offer explicit instruction, three or more opportunities for practice, and specific feedback will provide students at least the equivalent of one-quarter credit of oral communication education. This component, however, is integrated with the principal content of the course, so that students are simultaneously "learning to communicate" and "communicating to learn."

3. Faculty are encouraged to be selective in choosing the mode(s) of oral communication that best support the principal learning objectives and disciplinary practices of the course. For example, a course in counseling psychology might emphasize one-on-one communication, while a course in ethics might emphasize debate.

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MATHEMATICAL REASONING (MAR) (Foundation Studies)

Description:

Mathematical Reasoning: A course that develops a student's understanding of mathematics and mathematical problem-solving.

Guidelines:

1. A course in mathematical reasoning must focus on topics that develop a student's understanding of mathematics and mathematical problem-solving skills beyond the level the student attained in secondary school. These topics should illustrate different aspects of mathematical reasoning (for example, quantitative, symbolic, geometric) and the interplay between them.
2. In this course, students must be involved in solving problems that require them to use creativity and insight.
3. The course must provide practice reading mathematics and explaining mathematics.
4. The course must place the topics studied within some broader context, for example, the origins and historical development of the topics or applications of the topics to other disciplines.

Comments: (Numbers correlate to numbered guidelines)

1. Three to four years of high school mathematics are recommended for admission to St. Olaf; this usually includes elementary and intermediate algebra, geometry and precalculus. A course in mathematical reasoning should not simply duplicate the content of these courses. It may go beyond previous experience by assuming the mathematical maturity developed in earlier courses or by building on the content of earlier courses, by either extension or application.

Courses whose primary focus is not mathematics should comprise mathematics as a significant component of the course.

2. While drill on techniques is necessary, students should solve problems that require more than applying formulas or executing clearly-defined algorithms. Such problems could involve making extensions or generalizations of known results, developing mathematical models, or exploring examples to make conjectures.

3. Explaining mathematical ideas and arguments, either verbally or in writing, serves two purposes: it helps clarify students' thinking about problems and concepts and it improves their facility with mathematical language. For example, students could be asked to describe their approach to problems, to justify their answers to questions, or to give examples to illustrate concepts and theorems. Practice in reading mathematical resources enhances students' ability to learn more mathematics on their own.

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PHYSICAL ACTIVITY (PHA) (Foundation Studies)

Description:

Physical Activity: Two different 1/4 courses or one 1/2 course providing students with participation in structured physical activity and designed to enhance their knowledge of present and long-term physical well-being.

Guidelines:

1. Courses must provide instruction and practice in a structured physical activity.
2. Courses must provide instruction about how the activity contributes to health and fitness.
3. Courses must include instruction on how to maintain a physically healthy lifestyle.

Comments:

1. The two courses may be taken in the same activity provided they are at different levels.

Structured physical activity includes a wide range of options. Each course must satisfy all three guidelines, but the manner and extent to which a course does so will vary according to the particular activity in question.

In the case of motor skills courses, the GEC recommends that in addition to guided practice, students be taught the rules and etiquette of participation, as contributing to their fuller enjoyment of the activity.

Participants in an intercollegiate sport or in a dance company may receive credit for one required 1/4 course.

2. The GEC recommends that all courses give students knowledge with which to assess and enhance their own physical fitness, both in relation to a course's particular activity and in relation to long-term physical well-being.

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HISTORICAL STUDIES IN WESTERN CULTURE (HWC) (Core Studies)

Description:

Historical Studies in Western Culture: Two courses dealing with the Western cultural heritage, intended to develop historical perspective on, and critical appreciation of, its major traditions, institutions, and achievements.

Guidelines:

1. The focus of these courses is the history of the cultural heritage of Europe, whether in its countries of origin or influence.
2. Cultural heritage includes the institutional, intellectual, and creative manifestations of human activity and expression.
3. To develop historical perspective, courses must relate their subjects to the broader historical and cultural contexts in which they occurred, and they must help students attain a sense of relationship with the past and an awareness of the viewpoint from which they approach it.
4. Courses will develop critical appreciation through the enquiring analysis of historical evidence and cultural phenomena, and by stressing the complex causes that lie behind the development of the cultural heritage.
5. Courses must cover a period of sufficient length to illustrate the origins or development of their subject over time.
6. Major traditions, institutions, and achievements are those whose impact and influence have been far-reaching and long-lasting.

Comments: (Numbers correlate to numbered guidelines)

1. In drawing up this guideline, the GEC has in mind, first, the word "Western" in the title and description, and second, the cultures designated for study under Multicultural Studies (Asian, African, Latin American, Middle Eastern, and Russian). The GEC wishes to maintain a distinction between what is studied under each of the requirements. However, it would be quite possible for a course concerning some aspect of the cultural heritage of Russia, or of a country in Latin America, to qualify under historical Studies in Western Culture provided the focus was upon what was European or of European origin.

2. "Cultural heritage" is a broad term, embracing a wide range of subjects and phenomena. The institutional heritage includes the political, economic, social, religious and artistic. The intellectual heritage includes theology, philosophy, science, and political and economic theory. Art, literature, music, dance, theater, film, and television fall within the artistic heritage. Subjects from any of these fields would be suitable for study under this requirement, provided they offered an historically based course.

3. Courses that focus upon some particular aspect of the western cultural heritage, whether institutional, intellectual or artistic, must study that aspect against the background of its broader cultural and historical setting, and give attention to the perspectives of the people of the time and place being studied.

To help students attain a sense of relationship with the past is to help them recognize both a connection with it and a detachment from it, to recognize that they are part of a continuously unfolding story but situated at a different point in its ongoing development from the period being studied.

4. The enquiring analysis of historical evidence introduces students to questions such as, "What constitutes historical evidence?" "What choices must be made in the selection of evidence?" and "How is historical evidence used to construct an account of the past?" Courses should develop an understanding of "history" as an interpretative reconstruction of the past. They should alert students to the intellectual premises and procedures underlying such a reconstruction.

Critical appreciation means the ability to carry out an informed analysis of the particular subject of the course in relation to its historical context, and to arrive at an appreciation of the multiple influences that have shaped the development of the western cultural heritage. In addition, critical appreciation of the Western cultural heritage implies that courses will attempt to evaluate that heritage in terms of its merits and weaknesses. It might address such questions as: Why does Western culture give prominence to some achievements over others? Is Western culture a stable body of achievement, or does it undergo periodic reassessment and redefinition?

5. Courses should be of sufficient breadth and importance of topic to distinguish them from narrower, more specialized courses designed for majors in the field. Typically the principal subject matter of such courses will span a period of at least a century.

6. The GEC is ready to be persuaded by faculty that the subject of a proposed course is something "whose impact and influence have been far-reaching and long-lasting."

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MULTICULTURAL STUDIES (MCS-G, MCS-D) (Core Studies)

Description:

Multicultural Studies: The requirement consists of two parts: one course and one component, intended to develop understanding and appreciation of cultural diversity. The course develops understanding of cultures outside the western tradition. The component develops understanding of cultural diversity within U.S. society, with a focus on race, ethnicity or gender.

Comment on the Description:

Those working in the area of race, ethnicity and gender recognize that all three of these categories are significant primarily as social categories or constructions, rather than as biological or physical categories.

A. Global Course (MCS-G):

Guidelines:

1. Multicultural Studies introduce students to non-Western traditions and societies.

2. Cultural studies focus on patterned systems of belief and behavior that may be expressed broadly in world views, values, and social institutions, and more specifically, for example, in notions of time and space, custom, and gesture. Courses in Multicultural Studies should, therefore, treat one or more significant aspects of a society or societies in their cultural and intercultural context.

Comments: (Numbers correlate to numbered guidelines)

I. The General Education Committee acknowledges that many "non-Western" areas have been heavily influenced by Western culture, and that some cultural expressions -- say, Latin American literature -- might be interpreted as Western. We will rely on the instructor's course proposal to help us determine if a course should count for Multicultural Studies credit.

Although the description of the Multicultural Studies requirement includes Russian in its enumeration of cultures outside the Western tradition, it may be argued that Russian culture is misplaced and indeed reflects the European tradition. Therefore, courses on Russian culture and on the republics of the former Soviet Union may count as Historical Studies in Western Culture or Multicultural Studies, depending on the principal emphasis of the course.

Courses on African Americans, Asian Americans, Hispanic Americans, and Native Americans are not appropriate for Multicultural Studies course credit but are appropriate for the multicultural component.

2. Courses in a variety of disciplines may satisfy this requirement: for example, literature (in translation or in the original language), fine arts, history, philosophy, religion, behavioral sciences, as well as cultural area studies (Asian Studies, Hispanic Studies, African Studies, etc.). To fulfill the general education requirement in Multicultural Studies, a literature course, for example, might focus on the literature of a particular culture, noting, as appropriate, the influence of the culture on the literature, and vice versa.

Because these courses are multicultural, they are comparative in nature and involve to a greater or lesser extent comparison with other cultures.

B. Domestic Component (MCS-D):

Guidelines:

1. The Multicultural Studies component focuses on the diversity of culture and experience in U.S. society which grows out of racial, gender, or ethnic differences. Such diversity is best illustrated by components which explore the way in which the group(s) considered have an experience and culture which are substantially different from that of the dominant groups in U.S. society.
2. The component explores social experiences and cultural traditions, represented in patterned systems of belief, behavior, and expression. Such patterns may be expressed broadly in world views, values, social institutions, notions of time and space, customs, and gestures.

3. The component must be an integrated, recurrent, substantial part of the course.

Comments: (Numbers correlate to numbered guidelines)

1. Other GEC requirements introduce students to the dominant cultural traditions of Euro-American society; this requirement asks students to learn that Americans have diverse experiences and cultural traditions, and to understand something of the cultural traditions and experiences (past or present) of those people who, while often marginalized by the dominant society, have significantly contributed to this diversity. In that spirit, those groups whose experiences best increase our understanding of diversity are Native Americans, African Americans, Asian Americans, Hispanic Americans, and women. The experience of ethnic groups like Irish Americans and Jewish Americans, whose cultural traditions differ(ed) significantly from those of the dominant British-American society to which they came and whose inclusion in American society was problematic for so long, would probably also count for this component. This list is not exhaustive, and GEC will rely on course proposals to determine when components based on the traditions and experiences of other groups in U.S. society should count for this requirement.

2. Components of courses in a variety of disciplines may satisfy this requirement: for example, literature, fine arts, history, religion, sociology, anthropology, economics, psychology, political science, social work, and biology, as well as interdisciplinary cultural studies. To fulfill the general education requirement in Multicultural Studies, a sociology course might, for example, include a component on the social organization of traditional Native American communities; a literature course might include a component on African American dramas and their social context; a biology course might include a component on women's health issues. Courses which examine only non-cultural aspects of a group (such as the biology of sickle cell anemia among Blacks, without reference to broader cultural and social implications) would usually not be appropriate to meet this requirement.

3. The Multicultural Studies component should be an essential and natural part of the course, not an add-on separate from other course materials or peripheral to the principal course objectives.

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ARTISTIC AND LITERARY STUDIES (ALS-A, ALS-L) (Core Studies)

Description:

Artistic and Literary Studies: Two courses, one in each sub-area, intended to develop appreciation and understanding of artistic and literary forms -- their essential elements as well as their various functions in human life and culture.

A. Artistic Studies (ALS-A):

Guidelines:

1. Artistic forms include the visual and performing arts--visual art, film, music, theater, and dance.

2. Courses must help students achieve an informed appreciation of the aesthetic and formal properties of the art that is the subject of the course, and an understanding of the art within the broader context of human life and culture.

3. Courses may develop appreciation and understanding through performance, creation or criticism:

(a) Performance includes acting in plays, or performing musical compositions or choreographed dances.

(b) Creation is the making of new works, in the studio arts, film, music, theater or dance.

(c) Criticism is the analysis of artistic forms.

4. Fractional courses totaling one course may satisfy this requirement if:

(a) All courses are in the same artistic form

(b) The combination of fractional courses as a whole satisfies the guidelines above.

Comments: (Numbers correlate to numbered guidelines)

2. "Informed appreciation" may be achieved and expressed in a variety of ways, depending on the artistic form being studied. In making course proposals, faculty are encouraged to describe the most appropriate way, in their particular field, by which students can meet this section of the guidelines. The "broader context of human life and culture" refers to the contexts and circumstances in which artistic forms arise, and the ways in which they affect performer, viewer or audience. More generally, it refers to the role artistic forms play within human culture, and the distinctive experience or knowledge they offer. All courses, whether in performance, creation or criticism, must relate their subject-matter to aspects of this broader context.

4. (b) It is the responsibility of departments, in consultation with faculty teaching the relevant courses, to design the combination of fractional courses that would meet the guidelines as a whole.

B. Literary Studies (ALS-L):

Guidelines:

1. Literary forms include the genres of poetry, prose, and drama as text.

2. Courses must help students achieve an informed appreciation of the aesthetic and formal properties of the literature being studied, and an understanding of the place of the literature within the broader context of human life and culture.

3. Courses fulfilling this requirement may be either in creative writing or in literature.

4. Creative Writing Courses:

(a) Courses must give equal attention to creative writing and to the reading of primary works.

(b) The writing and the reading may be in one or more genres.

5. Literature Courses:

(a) The reading must concentrate on primary rather than secondary or critical texts.

(b) Texts may include works in translation.

(c) The scope of the course must be broad; it must include texts by several writers; it may contain works in one or more genres.

Comments: (Numbers correlate to numbered guidelines)

2. Insofar as "informed appreciation" will be expressed in written form (it could also emerge in class discussions and oral reports), it might appear in either critical or creative writing. Critical writing explores literature from the outside, creative writing from the inside. The "broader context of human life and culture" refers to the contexts and circumstances in which literary forms arise and the effect and influence they have upon readers. More generally, it refers to the role literature, as against other forms of human expression, plays within human life and culture, and the distinctive kinds of experience or knowledge it offers.

4. To fulfill this requirement, creative writing courses must provide more than a workshop setting in which students practice and improve their own writing. They must require students to read, analyze and discuss examples of work within the chosen genre or genres in which they are writing. The reading and creative writing should be designed to work in conjunction to achieve the ends of the course.

5. (c) In order to be suitable for and attractive to the general education student, courses should offer a broad selection of literature. These cannot be single author courses. They should include work by half a dozen or so writers, but faculty are free to justify a lesser or larger number in light of the aims of the course.

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BIBLICAL AND THEOLOGICAL STUDIES (BTS-B, BTS-T) (Core Studies)

Description:

Biblical and Theological Studies: This requirement consists of:

A. Religion 121, The Bible in Culture and Community, taken in the first year (BTS-B);

B. A course on Christian theology that engages students in theological reflection and acquaints them with efforts to understand the essential content of Christian belief in a critical, coherent manner (BTS-T).

B. Christian Theology (BTS-T):

Guidelines:

1. Christian theology may be defined as critical and normative reflection on the Christian church's teaching.
2. Since the heart of the church's teaching is the biblical God and this God's Christ, this course must be explicitly and thematically concerned with the biblical God and Jesus the Christ.
3. Theological reflection on God and Christ is distinguished from other possible modes of reflection on the same matters by being critical and normative.
4. The course must involve exposure to substantial parts of the existing theological tradition.

Comments: (Numbers correlate to numbered guidelines)

1. This definition of Christian theology is the broadest and most formal possible. It is suited to the needs of undergraduate education by its ability to comprehend theological self-understandings that might otherwise reject each other.

2. The phrase, "Christian theology," itself stipulates this guideline: the discourse ("logos") to be cultivated is about God ("theos") as qualified by reference to Christ.

3. Not every course about religion or even the Christian religion can fit under this rubric. The course is one "in Christian theology." The words "critical" and "normative" serve to capture the distinction of theology from other modes of reflection on the same matter.

Theology is critical in that the Christian church's discourse about God and Christ claims to be meaningful and true. We may and must ask such questions as: How, if at all, is what the church has taught about God and Christ meaningful? Is what the church has taught about God and Christ true to God and Christ? Is it true at all? How would one answer any of these questions?

Christian theological reflection is normative in that it intends to shape the church's continuing discourse about God and Christ. Theology asks the question: What should Christians say in future, if they wish to speak truly about God and Christ?

4. Christian theology is a temporally extended and multi-cultural discussion about the church's discourse of God and Christ. A course satisfying this requirement will introduce students into this discussion by presentation of classic movements or representatives of the tradition.

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STUDIES IN NATURAL SCIENCE (NST-x, NSL) (Core Studies)

Description:

Studies in Natural Science: Two courses that develop a student's understanding of scientific knowledge, the process of scientific discovery, and the role of the sciences in society and culture. The two courses taken by a student may not be in the same department or interdisciplinary program; one of the courses must be a laboratory course [NSL]; and while courses in a variety of disciplines may satisfy this requirement, at least one of the two must be in biology, chemistry or physics [NST-B, NST-C, or NST-P].

Administrative Guideline:

The two courses taken by a student may not be in the same department or interdisciplinary program. While courses in a variety of disciplines may satisfy this requirement, at least one of the courses must be in biology, chemistry or physics.

Guidelines:

1. The primary focus of courses is on scientific content, scientific principles, and the methodology of contemporary natural science.
2. Courses develop some understanding of how the content and principles were discovered and how they have come to be accepted as valid.
3. Courses must include some discussion of the reciprocal relationships between science and society. Courses which treat the broader aspects of science would be appropriate, provided they also satisfy Guideline 1.
4. To count as a laboratory course, the students must have substantial and direct experience in doing natural science, including data collection and analysis of experimental results. Labs should also be somewhat exploratory in nature or aimed at discovery. In addition, students should develop some experience in designing experiments.

Comment on Administrative Guideline:

Courses in a variety of disciplines may satisfy this requirement, for example experimental psychology, nursing, nutrition, kinesiology, earth and planetary science, environmental studies, etc., as well as biology, chemistry, and physics. The GEC will look especially carefully at courses offered in areas which are not traditionally considered natural science to be sure that they satisfy the criteria of Guideline 1.

Comments: (Numbers correlate to numbered guidelines)

1. By "content" the GEC means those aspects of the natural world which lend themselves to scientific study. By "principles" the GEC means the basic assumptions which natural scientists use in their study of natural and technological phenomena: e.g., conservation of energy, atomic theory, evolution, constancy of physical processes over time, etc. By "methodology" the GEC means those approaches which natural

scientists use in their study, including theory building, direct experimentation, descriptive and predictive model building, and comparisons of predictions with actual observations.

It is impossible to define succinctly and completely "natural science" Areas differ in their emphases and approaches. The GEC will look for the following characteristics of the contents of proposed courses, recognizing that not all courses will have all of these characteristics:

- a. Empirical objectivity
- b. Consensual knowledge
- c. Use of technical and unambiguous language
- d. Direct observation of phenomena
- e. Use of fundamental principles to explain and understand broad ranges of phenomena
- f. Problem-solving methods
- g. Use of quantitative methods, graphs and approximations
- h. Use of instrumentation, either for controlling variables or for extending and improving observation
- i. Experimental manipulation of variables

The GEC interprets the word "primary" as meaning more than half of the course content.

In discussing the content, principles, and methodology of contemporary natural science, courses should help students recognize the differences between the kinds of questions which can be explored scientifically and those which cannot.

3. Examples of relationships which could be included are: the impact of technological developments on society; political and social influences on science through funding sources or other means; how scientific developments change people's world views. . . . The GEC feels that courses which are primarily about science (studying epistemology, structure, history, relations to culture and society, relation to other disciplines, gender issues, ethical issues, relation to technology and impact on environment. . . .) may ordinarily fit better into other places in the curriculum (e.g. "Sociology of Science" in Studies in Human Behavior and Society, "Biomedical Ethics" in Ethical Issues and Normative Perspectives, etc.); however, faculty are encouraged to develop courses which satisfy the guidelines for Studies in Natural Science which integrate these "science studies" topics into courses where the primary focus is on scientific content, principles, and methodology.

4. The GEC expects that normally lab courses will involve a minimum of 25 hours of laboratory work.

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STUDIES IN HUMAN BEHAVIOR AND SOCIETY (HBS) (Core Studies)

Description:

Studies in Human Behavior and Society: Two courses introducing concepts, theories, and methods for the empirical understanding of human behavior, social relations, social institutions and social issues. The two courses taken by a student may not be in the same discipline or interdisciplinary program.

Guidelines:

1. Courses introduce students to the disciplined analysis of one or more of the following: human behavior; social relations; and social institutions.
2. Courses introduce students to prevailing theories of individual and social behavior, and to methods for analyzing and interpreting empirical evidence. That evidence may be either quantitative or qualitative.
3. Courses engage students in the systematic examinations of social issues, past, present, or both.
4. Courses that incorporate both normative and empirical analysis must give equal or greater attention to the latter.

Comments

1. Courses in Human Behavior and Society examine how and why people come to be human or to act as human beings, and how they organize and interact. Some courses may focus on individual human behavior, while other courses may focus on patterns of aggregate behavior in social relations or social institutions.

For courses with a social emphasis, human behavior can be understood as patterns of choices made in response to social and institutional systems. Such courses should illuminate the ways that people make choices in the face of social sanctions, institutional incentives and disincentives, etc. They can also examine the ways in which individual choices shape social institutions.

Institutions organize social behavior to fulfill human needs in an orderly way. Most societies have an institution for reproduction (the family), for transmitting social knowledge (education), for attending to ultimate questions (religion), for feeding and clothing members (the economy, including formal and informal markets), and for managing conflict (government). But primary and informal group behavior -- dyads, friendships, small groups, voluntary organizations, etc. -- may also order human behavior, and could also be the focus for courses in Human Behavior and Society.

2. Courses in Human Behavior and Society also introduce the systematic analysis of empirical evidence as a distinctive way of knowing. Empirical evidence is derived from the deliberate observation of human experience, complementing other modes of

inquiry, such as intuition, normative analysis, or purely abstract reasoning. The systematic gathering and analysis of empirical evidence is based on reasoned choices about what and how to observe.

Courses may analyze and interpret a variety of empirical evidence. Some of the evidence may be primarily quantitative, consisting of statistics which summarize patterns in aggregate behavior; some may be primarily qualitative, consisting of the systematic rendering and interpretation of people's words and/or systematic accounts of their behavior in their ordinary surroundings; and some may be both. Empirical evidence may be gathered through polls and surveys; various kinds of experimental research; open-ended interviewing; participant observation; content analysis; discourse analysis; and carefully-crafted case studies. Such evidence may be used to describe, explain, and/or predict individual or aggregate human behavior, and to help evaluate the usefulness of relevant and important theory.

While explicit attention to theories, concepts, and methods of empirical analysis are an essential part of a general education course in Human Behavior and Society, that attention should not be the exclusive focus of the course. Advance courses in research methods are more suitable for disciplinary or interdisciplinary major requirements than for general education. The primary purpose of this part of the requirement is to provide students with the skills they need for the critical assessment of empirical evidence, not to train them to do advanced empirical research themselves.

3. Courses must provide opportunities for students to apply their knowledge of human behavior, social relations, and/or social institutions, and their skills in the critical assessment of empirical evidence, to the examination of social issues. While many of these issues will have current significance, some may be more characteristic of past societies.

4. While empirical inquiry is distinct from other ways of knowing, such as normative, aesthetic, or interpretive, each mode of inquiry speaks profoundly to the concerns of the others. Thus, courses that meet this requirement may also introduce non-empirical ways of thinking systematically about human behavior and society. Indeed, the inclusion of more than one way of knowing may enrich considerably the content of a course in this area.

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ETHICAL ISSUES AND NORMATIVE PERSPECTIVES (EIN) (Integrative Studies)

Description:

Ethical Issues and Normative Perspectives: An upper level course that analyzes ethical issues from a variety of perspectives that provide norms of justice and well-being and guide moral reasoning. The normative frameworks employed in the course will include one or more perspectives from the Christian theological tradition.

Guidelines:

1. The approach and content of this course must be chosen primarily for junior and senior students.

2. The course must be constructed around issues of contemporary ethical concern and of relevance to students' study at St. Olaf.
3. Whatever its disciplinary basis, the course must integrate the disciplinary content and approach with the consideration of ethical issues and the analysis of normative perspectives.
4. Ethical analysis is central to the course and should have both a practical and a theoretical dimension to it: it should be practical in its focus upon current issues; it should be theoretical in developing an understanding of moral reasoning itself.
5. The normative perspectives employed in the course must be drawn from a combination of the Christian theological tradition and other traditions, or from the Christian theological tradition alone. The normative perspectives may be historical, contemporary, or a combination of both.
6. The course must show that there are alternative normative frameworks for critical and constructive ethical reasoning.

Comments: (Numbers correlate to numbered guidelines)

3. Assuming that instructors teaching the course will include faculty from disciplines in addition to ethics and theology, the GEC will expect those instructors to have undertaken appropriate faculty development to prepare to teach the ethical and theological dimensions of the course at a level appropriate for an upper level, general education course.

That this course must be integrative may be understood in at least two ways. If the course is based upon some discipline other than ethics or Christian theology, then it will be integrative in an interdisciplinary sense: it will bring together its primary discipline and ethical study. At another level it will be integrative by considering how the good offered by one discipline fits into a total concept of what is considered good, how the part is integrated into the whole. This sense would apply even if the course were being taught exclusively as a course in Christian theological ethics or primarily as a course in philosophy. In both cases, it would consider how what the discipline offered fitted into some comprehensive notion of what is good.

5. Examples of historical and contemporary normative perspectives include the Aristotelian, utilitarian, Kantian, Marxist, and feminist. They also include perspectives drawn from religions other than Christianity. Examples of historical and contemporary Christian perspectives include the Augustinian, Thomist, Lutheran, liberal, and liberationist.