Guidelines for Course Review for the Seven-Course Breadth Distribution Requirement

Introduction

Over the years, the Berkeley faculty has consistently valued two parallel curricula for our students: one that studies a field in depth and may entail connecting two or more disciplines (the departmental or interdisciplinary major), and a second curriculum that allows students to explore different fields of knowledge beyond their primary interest (the individual breadth curriculum). The latter is largely designed by students themselves within guidelines provided by the College of Letters and Science via the Seven-Course Breadth Distribution Requirement. By selecting courses from seven broad areas of knowledge, students may develop their known interests and/or explore new ones.

The purpose of the breadth requirement is to provide a liberal arts and science education for all undergraduates and to facilitate each student's ownership and management of their individual curriculum. More specific **goals** include:

- To broaden students' perspectives and introduce them to ways of seeing/studying the world they may not otherwise be exposed to if they adopted only their own disciplinary lenses
- To serve as a context in which students may configure a coherent course of study by drawing from the many curricular options available to them.
- To give students the foundation on which to continue their education after they receive their degree.
- To help form well-rounded, informed and educated individuals and citizens, not only of California and the U.S., but also of the world

The L&S Committee on Courses of Instruction and Academic Programs (CAP) serves as the subcommittee of the L&S Executive Committee for reviewing courses for breadth designation.

Course Eligibility

- All undergraduate courses across campus, with a unit value of 3 or higher, and approved by the Academic Senate's Committee on Courses of Instruction (COCI), may be submitted by the department for review, with the exception of courses numbered 84, 97, 98, 99, and 190 and above.
- A breadth designation is granted at the course level under the presumption that subsequent offerings of each class from semester to semester will contain the same core content, pre-requisites (if applicable), and workload. Courses that allow for variation in content and focus with each class offering (e.g. special topics courses, courses repeatable for credit) are generally not eligible for breadth consideration.
- To qualify for breadth credit in a particular distribution area, at least half of the course content should address the knowledge emphasis of the area as described below.
- Breadth approvals are granted for 5 years unless the course changes significantly (e.g. new title, description or change in unit value). At the 5-year point, departments will be contacted with an opportunity to renew breadth designations.

Review Process

1. Verify that the course has been approved by the Academic Senate's Committee on Courses of Instruction (COCI) with your department scheduler and/or curriculum coordinator. If COCI has not approved the course, see the COCI Toolbox for guidelines on submitting a course for Academic Senate approval.
2. The course instructor along with the department chair (or staff designee) completes the Breadth Request Form noting information on the course (e.g. title, department, unit value), the area(s) of breadth distribution requested for consideration, and a rationale for how the course meets the criteria for fulfilling each knowledge area.
3. Submit the completed form and course syllabus to the Coordinator of Educational Policy at lsec@berkeley.edu.

4. Requests must be submitted at least a semester in advance of the course being offered as an option for fulfilling breadth. A breadth designation cannot be approved for a course once instruction has started. Approvals are granted for a particular term and going forward (approvals cannot be 'backdated' to prior class offerings).
5. Requests are reviewed on a monthly basis during the fall and spring semesters. For meeting dates and deadlines for submissions, see the CAP meeting schedule on the Executive Committee website (http://ls.berkeley.edu/about-college/college-leadership/l-s-executive-committee).

Descriptions of Seven-Course Breadth Knowledge Areas

Arts and Literature (AL)
The Arts and Literature breadth requirement is intended to provide students with knowledge and appreciation of the creative arts. Courses meeting this requirement involve significant engagement with arts, literature or language, either through critical study of works of art or through the creation of art. Courses designed primarily to give technical skills, e.g., language acquisitions, or musical performance techniques, are not eligible to meet Arts and Literature breadth.

Biological Science (BS)
The Biological Sciences breadth requirement is intended to introduce students to the diversity of life on all scales (e.g., molecular genetics, structural biochemistry, ecosystems, and evolution). Courses that satisfy the Biological Sciences requirement use a combination of observation, hypothesis-driven data analysis and experimentation.

Historical Studies (HS)
The Historical Studies requirement is intended to provide students with perspectives on the human condition and an appreciation of the origins and evolution of the numerous cultures and social orders that have populated the earth. Courses fulfilling this requirement deal with the human events, institutions and activities of the past.

International Studies (IS)
The International Studies requirement is intended to educate students in depth about the contemporary political, socio-economic and cultural life of a country other than the United States. IS courses should be centered both on a country or region other than United States and on the contemporary period; courses that are primarily historical in approach will receive International breadth only if they focus extensively on the contemporary period.

Philosophy and Values (PV)
The Philosophy and Values requirement is intended to enable students to investigate the intellectual and ethical motivations that inspire the record of humanity's social and cultural achievement and to ponder the types of questions that will enhance their ability to understand their heritage, their contemporaries, and themselves. Courses fulfilling this requirement include those with a major focus on religion, ethics, legal values, or leading philosophical figures.

Physical Science (PS)
The Physical Sciences requirement is intended to provide students with a quantitative understanding of the physical universe, from its microscopic underpinnings to its large-scale structure and evolution. Courses that satisfy the Physical Sciences requirement teach students how to explain natural phenomena starting from first principles, using a combination of reason, experiment, and quantitative analysis. Purely quantitative courses (most often in mathematics, statistics, or computer science) do not qualify, nor do computer programming courses.

Social and Behavioral Sciences (SBS)
The Social and Behavioral Sciences requirement provides students with the tools they need to analyze the determinants of human behavior, the dynamics of social interaction among human beings, and the complex political, economic, cultural, and psychological factors at play in societies. Courses meeting this requirement include courses in development studies, economics, political economy, history, legal studies, political science, sociology, social welfare, and many courses in anthropology, linguistics and psychology.