

COURSE GOALS AND CRITERIA DOCUMENT

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P E R S P E C T I V E S

AESTHETIC ANALYSIS

Working Definition:

The disciplines that study the performing, visual, and literary arts offer systems of thought and a vocabulary for understanding and interpreting creative expression within a variety of contexts. Courses within this perspective investigate the history and theory of a range of artistic forms. Aesthetic analysis engages students in creative processes.

Requirement: Students must take four credits in this area.

Course Goals:

1. To develop a vocabulary for interpreting and describing aesthetic experiences.
2. To gain an understanding of visual, performing, or literary arts as reflections of the cultures that produced them.
3. To acquire a knowledge of formal and thematic characteristics of different media and genres.

Course Criteria:*

1. At least 75% of the course material must broadly reflect the course goals for the perspective.
2. A course description in the syllabus that reflects the course goals for the perspective.
3. A preponderance of graded assignments must reflect the course goals for the perspective.

*The criteria for all of the perspectives will be the same.

CREATIVE EXPRESSION

Working Definition: Creative expression is a unique means through which humans interpret experience. Students fulfilling this requirement will engage in the creative process, which involves investigation and devotion to craft.

Requirement: Students must take four credits in this area.

Course Goals:

1. To provide direction and form to a creative impulse.
2. To engage actively in the creative process.
3. To shape the discrete work of art within or against the relevant convention.
4. To give and receive constructive criticism.

Course Criteria: See criteria above for "Aesthetic Analysis."

PREMODERN WORLDS

Working Definition:

The study of the past offers insights into the present, not only by showing continuity of traditions, but also by illuminating the differences between the modern world and the past. In order to understand the theories, practices, forms, and archetypes that define the present world, students must have knowledge of their premodern predecessors. These investigations into the premodern worlds are by nature multidisciplinary and multicultural.

Requirement: Students must take four credits in this area.

Course Goals:

1. To understand both the commonalities and the particularities of our human experience through consideration of a wide array of thought, behavior, and creations within the premodern worlds.
2. To instill an understanding of, and training in, methodologies including language, literature, history (both humanities-based and science-based), social theory, the arts, philosophy, and religion of the premodern worlds.
3. To provide an understanding of premodern traditions that have helped shape present cultures.

Course Criteria: See criteria above for "Aesthetic Analysis."

MODERN AND / OR CONTEMPORARY WORLDS

Working Definition:

Awareness of the significance of the modern and / or contemporary worlds is essential in order to understand the values, cultures, and beliefs of the world in which we live. Conceptions of modernity vary from discipline to discipline and from culture to culture; the roots of modernity reach as far back as the Renaissance for some, or the industrial revolution for others. Likewise, the characteristics of the contemporary world may differ depending on the culture or discipline that defines them.

Requirement: Students must take four credits in this area.

Course Goals:

1. To understand both the commonalities and the particularities of our human experience through consideration of a wide array of thought, behavior, and creations within the modern and / or contemporary worlds.
2. To instill an understanding of, and training in, methodologies including language, literature, history (both humanities-based and science-based), social theory, the arts, philosophy and religion of the modern and / or contemporary worlds.
3. To provide an understanding of the modern and / or contemporary intellectual traditions that have helped shape present cultures.

Course Criteria: See criteria above for "Aesthetic Analysis."

SCIENTIFIC INQUIRY

Working Definition:

In order to make decisions in today's complex and rapidly changing world, a basic understanding of science is necessary. The scientific inquiry perspective addresses both the nature of scientific understanding and the context of science. The courses within this perspective will introduce students to the strengths and limitations of the scientific method, and prepare them to deal with problems that involve quantitative and logical considerations, evidence, and uncertainty. In addition, students will have the opportunity to investigate the cultural and ethical implications of science.

Requirement: Students must take either a four-credit course with a built-in laboratory component or a four-credit course and a co-requisite two-credit laboratory experience to satisfy this perspective.

Course Goals:

1. To understand and apply scientific vocabulary, involving terms and concepts used in a physical, life, or behavioral science.
2. To understand and apply the methodology (including measurements, calibrations, modeling, etc.) of at least one of the sciences in order to make observations and carry out experimental protocols.
3. To understand and analyze data and draw appropriate conclusions.

Course Criteria: See criteria above for "Aesthetic Analysis."

SOCIAL AND CULTURAL DIVERSITIES

Working Definition:

The social and cultural diversities perspective focuses on the analysis of patterns of social differences in the United States. Distinctions based on race, class, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, religion, and age form the primary categories of analysis. From this investigation into social differences, students will develop an understanding of the complexity, multiplicity, and fluidity of identities as determined by themselves and others. Social and cultural diversities and global systems are complementary perspectives. Both emphasize the importance of studying difference in the context of other peoples, cultures, and ways of life, one on a national level and the other on a global level.

Requirement: Students must take four credits in this area.

Course Goals:

1. To develop awareness of the social and personal significance of categories of diversity in contemporary and historical contexts.
2. To develop an understanding of how categories of social and cultural diversity intersect and overlap.
3. To develop an understanding of the complex interplay between social and cultural diversity and personal identity.
4. To expand the ability to evaluate critically contemporary issues pertaining to social and cultural diversities.

Course Criteria: See criteria above for "Aesthetic Analysis."

GLOBAL SYSTEMS AND LANGUAGES

Working Definition:

The global systems perspective seeks to instill in students an understanding of the interconnectedness of different peoples and cultures outside of the United States. Through the study of global issues, students will develop cultural awareness that will be necessary and useful both in their daily lives and their future careers. The inclusion of foreign languages in the global systems perspective acknowledges language as more than a skill and recognizes that a foreign culture cannot be fully understood without exposure to that culture's language.

Requirement: Student must take four credits in the global systems area and must fulfill the language requirement.

A. Global Systems: Students must take four credits in this area.

Course Goals:

1. To develop cultural awareness and knowledge of global systems.
2. To develop an understanding of the interconnectedness of life in the 21st century.
3. To develop a conceptual framework for understanding global issues and interdependence.
4. To provide insight into the emergence of a global community.

B. Language Requirement: Between 0 and eight credits

This requirement offers a choice of depth or breadth: students may either complete the intermediate level of a language already studied in high school (depth) or begin a new foreign language and pursue it through the elementary level (breadth).

Students can place out of this requirement by:

1. Receiving a score of 4 or higher on a foreign language or literature Advanced Placement test.
2. Placing out of the intermediate level on any of our foreign language placement tests.
3. Being a native speaker of another language with a demonstrable ability to speak and write English (TOEFL of 550 or above).

International students whose TOEFL scores are below 550 may fulfill the language component of this perspective by completing English 120 and a first-year writing requirement course.

Course Goals:

1. To develop knowledge of a foreign culture through the study of its language.
2. To instill in students a deeper understanding of their own culture and language through the study of foreign languages and cultures.
3. To develop successful communication skills in a foreign language at the basic or intermediate level.

Course Criteria: See criteria above for "Aesthetic Analysis."

SKILLS

WRITING REQUIREMENT

Working Definition

The writing requirement at Hollins emphasizes the importance of strong skills in written communication. Through a cross-disciplinary writing program, students will develop their writing skills in different rhetorical situations.

Requirement: Students must take eight credits of writing intensive courses, four of which are to be taken before the end of the first year. Four of these credits must focus on expository writing. Some students may be required to complete a foundation course in writing (English 100) before enrolling in the first-year writing requirement, based on appropriate assessment by the director of the Writing Center and the dean for student academic affairs.

- A. English 100: This course will only be required for students who do not demonstrate an adequate level of writing ability. Students with low verbal scores on the SAT or ACT will be required to submit a writing sample to be reviewed by the director of the Writing Center and a faculty member or two.

Course Goals:

1. To bring students' writing abilities up to the college level and prepare them for their first-year writing course.
2. To make students conscious of, comfortable with, and proficient in all stages of composition from invention to drafting and revision to editing.
3. To provide students with a workshop format that involves constant practice in producing and analyzing expository prose.

B. Writing Requirement Courses (First-year and Additional):

Course Goals:

1. To respond to different rhetorical situations by using appropriate conventions of format, structure, and tone; to control syntax, grammar, punctuation, and spelling.
2. To use multiple drafts in the creation of a successful text; to develop flexible strategies for generating, revising, and editing texts.
3. In expository writing classes, to understand a writing assignment as a series of tasks which includes finding, evaluating, analyzing, and synthesizing primary and/or secondary sources; to integrate personal ideas with materials from those sources.

Course Criteria (First-year Writing Course):

Amount and Types of Writing:

1. 15 pages of formal, graded writing assignments (not including drafts).
2. No less than 40% of the final grade will be based on the above assignments. A portfolio method of grading is also an option.

3. Inclusion of graded or ungraded informal writing, written either in or outside the classroom (e.g., journals, exploratory writing, etc.).
4. If the FWR course is expository in nature, the preponderance of writing will be expository in form and one or more assignments will provide practice in the use of primary and/or secondary source materials.

Inclusion of Revision with Feedback:

A significant portion of the graded writing assignments should be revised based on feedback. Possible methods of providing feedback may include comments on drafts by the instructor, individual conferences between instructor and student, or peer groups. A portfolio approach is also an effective means of providing feedback.

Class Time Spent on Writing Instruction:

1. Instruction in writing should take place during class time, with an emphasis on understanding stages of the writing process, establishing a focus, consideration of audience, etc.
2. If the FWR course is expository in nature, instruction should take place during class time in the principles of documentation using primary and/or secondary sources (there are various ways in which the Writing Center can assist in presenting this information to students).

Course Criteria (Additional Writing Requirement)

Amount and Types of Writing:

1. 15 pages or more of formal, graded writing assignments (not including drafts). The total amount of writing in the course will depend on whether the emphasis is on breadth or depth as compared to a first-year writing requirement course.
2. No less than 30% of the final grade will be based on the above assignments. A portfolio method of grading is also an option.
3. Inclusion of graded or ungraded informal writing, written either in or outside the classroom (e.g., journals, exploratory writing, etc.).
4. If the AWR course is expository in nature, the preponderance of writing will be expository in form and one or more assignments will provide practice in the use of primary and/or secondary source materials.

Inclusion of Revision with Feedback:

A portion of the formal graded writing assignments should be revised based on feedback. Possible methods of providing feedback include comments on drafts by the instructor, individual conferences between instructor and student, or peer groups. A portfolio approach is also an effective means of providing feedback.

Class Time Spent on Writing Instruction:

1. Instruction in writing should address conventions pertinent to the discipline. Since this course may occur at any level, and since it may or may not be expository in nature, the specific emphasis will vary from course to course.

2. If the AWR is expository in nature, instruction should take place during class time in the principles of documentation using primary and/or secondary sources (there are various ways in which the Writing Center can assist in presenting this information to students).

ORAL COMMUNICATION

Working Definition:

In order to compete and succeed in today's world, effective oral communication skills are essential. These skills are also fundamental to the many, varied, and often complex facets of our day-to-day lives. As a result of the oral communication requirement across the curriculum, students will be able to speak effectively in public, make professional presentations, and articulate ideas clearly.

Requirement: Students may either take a course that is designated as fulfilling the oral communications requirement (normally 4 credits) during the regular term or short term, or take a competency test (if they can demonstrate formal training in oral communication such as participation on a debate team). Students who wish to satisfy the requirement through a competency test will be required to make a presentation to a group of faculty members and submit to either a written or oral exam addressing theoretical and practical knowledge of oral communication processes.

Course Goals:

1. To create / prepare oral presentations.
2. To perform oral presentations competently.

Course Criteria:

1. Students must give two presentations, the first should be between 2-3 minutes and should be given early in the term, and the second, a longer presentation of 5+ minutes, should be given later in the term.
2. A significant portion of the total course grade must be based on presentations (at least 20% of the final grade).
3. Instructors should spend a significant amount of time instructing or coaching students on preparation and presentation skills. At least two hours are recommended.

QUANTITATIVE REASONING

Working Definition:

Quantitative reasoning is the application of mathematical concepts and skills to solve real-world problems. In order to perform effectively as professionals and citizens, students must become competent in reading and using quantitative data, in understanding quantitative evidence and in applying basic quantitative skills to the solution of real-life problems.

Requirement: A student must take four credits of applied quantitative reasoning. In addition, students who place into MATH 100, MATH 105 or MATH 130, must take one of these four-credit courses.

- A. Basic Quantitative Reasoning (first level): Students can fulfill this requirement in one of two ways: By placing out after achieving a satisfactory score on the Quantitative Reasoning Assessment exam, or by passing Math 100, MATH 105 or MATH 130 (a four-credit course).

Course Goals (Math 100):

1. To understand mathematical and statistical reasoning.
2. To use appropriate mathematical and/or statistical tools in summarizing data, making predictions, and establishing cause-and-effect relationships.

B. Applied Quantitative Reasoning (second level): Students must take four credits in this area.

Course Goals:

1. To give students the opportunity to apply mathematical and statistical reasoning in a chosen discipline.
2. To involve students in the application of quantitative skills to problems that arise naturally in the discipline, in a way that advances the goals of the course in a manner that is not merely a rote application of a procedure.

Course Criteria:

1. A quantitative reasoning skills course must involve students in the application of quantitative skills to problems that arise naturally in the discipline, in a way that advances the goals of the course and in a manner that is not merely a rote application of a procedure.
2. In order to be approved as QR applied, a course must include at least two QR projects and devote class time to the proper use of quantitative skills building on what is taught in MATH 100 / MATH 105. The class discussions and the students' work on these projects must address a significant application of quantitative skills to problem solving within the given discipline.
3. The end result of each QR project should be a written assignment that includes a statement of the problem, an explanation of the methods used, and a summary of the results. When appropriate, the written assignment should discuss any limitations encountered and possible improvements to the procedure and/or results.

APPLIED RESEARCH TECHNIQUES

Working Definition:

Information literacy is an essential element in the education of a lifelong learner. It involves not only recognizing the need for information, but also having the ability to locate, gather, use, and document that information to effective ends. Students must be information literate if they are to be successful in their undergraduate careers, their professional work and their daily lives.

Requirement: Students do not take an additional course to satisfy this requirement. Rather, research techniques will be incorporated into various courses as a "research component."

Goals of Applied Research Techniques:

1. To identify and select the most appropriate investigative methods or information retrieval systems.
2. To identify, locate, and retrieve information.
3. To use information effectively to accomplish a specific purpose.

Course Criteria:

1. Students must work on at least one substantial research project or a series of research projects that includes a project with a bibliography of at least 10 sources.
2. A significant portion of the total course grade must be based on the research project (at least 20% of the final grade).
3. Instructors, librarians, or a combination of the two, should spend at least 2 hours instructing or coaching students on research techniques.