

Guidelines for Proposing and Reviewing Courses for WCAS Distribution Requirement Approval

Updated September 2010

1. Courses meeting distribution requirements in an area can be very broad introductions (as is usually the case in 100- and 200- level courses), or they can illustrate the scope and methodology of an area or the range of problems that a discipline confronts by focusing on a limited number of topics (more characteristic of 300- level courses). **Most courses taught in the College are appropriate for distribution credit.**
2. Independent study courses, internship and field study courses, freshman seminars, senior thesis seminars, and professional linkage seminars should **not** be proposed as distribution courses.
3. Applied arts courses where the focus is on *doing* an art (e.g., writing fiction or playing a musical instrument) should **not** be proposed as distribution courses.
4. In some departments, most courses fall into a particular distribution area. Be alert for exceptions. For example, in some social science departments, most courses will best fit Area III-Social and Behavioral Sciences. However, statistics courses offered by these departments would better fit Area II-Formal Studies.
5. Some **interdisciplinary courses** may be appropriate for more than one area (see important rules below for Interdisciplinary Studies courses).
6. Some courses are unlikely to be taken for distribution credit because their stated prerequisites complete the distribution requirements in an area. In special cases, however, students without the prerequisites may take these courses. Also, students who fulfill course prerequisites with AP credits cannot always use these credits toward distribution requirements. Courses should *not* be eliminated from consideration solely because their prerequisites complete the area requirements.

Additional guidelines for foreign language courses:

1. Lower-level courses that are used to fulfill the WCAS Foreign Language Proficiency requirement are not eligible for distribution credit.
2. Upper-level courses in which the focus is primarily on language skills (speaking, writing, or grammar, for example) should also not be proposed for distribution credit.
3. Many upper-level language courses involve reading and analyzing literature in the language. These are generally appropriate for consideration for Area VI-Literature and Fine Arts. However, other courses might be appropriate for other areas. For example, a course focusing on the reading and analysis of philosophical texts might be appropriate for Area V-Values. Some interdisciplinary courses are appropriate for both Area VI and another area (see note below).

Important rules regarding "Interdisciplinary Studies" courses: A course identified as "interdisciplinary" is approved for more than one distribution area; a student taking such a course chooses in which one eligible area to count it. Beginning in summer 2010, students can fulfill the two-unit requirement in an area with two Interdisciplinary Studies courses. This rule will apply retroactively to all students. (Prior to summer 2010, students could count at most one Interdisciplinary Studies course toward a distribution area; the second course had to be approved for that area only.)