

February 2017

Curriculum Committee Guidelines for Distribution, HDGE, and CUE Courses

I. Guidelines To Be Used In Determining Distribution Courses (AR, HU, SC, and SL)

General guidelines to be used by the Curriculum Committee in determining what courses should receive distribution designations are the following:

1. Distribution courses should primarily serve a general education function rather than providing specific career preparation.
2. Distribution courses may be more or less general or specific in terms of the range of material covered. What is important is that such courses exhibit patterns of thinking that are characteristic of work done in a particular distribution area.
3. A course may have at most one distribution designation.
4. Distribution courses will normally be housed within a department's designated distribution area (see below). *However, departments may request that a course carry a distribution designation other than the department's designated area. Such requests should include a rationale explaining why the course more closely aligns with the requested distribution area.*

Further principles apply to specific distribution areas:

1. **Arts (AR)**

Students develop the technical skills, problem solving ability, judgment, and courage necessary to create new work in the visual, performing, and literary arts, together with knowledge of the theory, history, and social context of artistic practice.

Departments and Programs: Art, Dance, Music, Theatre, and Creative Writing and Film Studies

2. **Humanities (HU)**

Students interpret and evaluate issues of human concern, experience, and expression by means of analysis, critical reasoning, and historical reflection. They cultivate knowledge and understanding of human activity and world views across time, geography, and cultures.

Departments and Programs: English; History; Languages, Literatures, and Cultures; Philosophy; Religion Studies; and American Studies; Film Studies; and Jewish Studies

3. **Natural Sciences and Mathematics (SC)**

Students explore biological, computational, mathematical, and physical theories and paradigms. They use quantitative and scientific problem solving skills to investigate natural phenomena.

Departments and Programs: Biology, Chemistry, Mathematics and Computer Science, Physics, and Environmental Science, Neuroscience, and Sustainability Studies

4. Social Sciences (SL)

Students investigate how modern institutional structures and social, political, economic and cultural practices shape and are shaped by individual choices, group behavior, and public policies. Students develop an understanding of the operations of power and ideology across social contexts, relationships and practices.

Departments and Programs: Accounting, Business, Economics and Finance; Education; Media and Communication; Political Science; Psychology; Sociology and Anthropology; and International Studies

II. Guidelines to Be Used for HDGE Courses

Requests for the DE designation should be specific in demonstrating how the course will broaden and deepen students' understanding of human difference and develop the intellectual and civic skills students require for participation in an increasingly diverse and interconnected world.

Determinations about which courses meet the DE requirement will be based on the alignment of course content with Muhlenberg's two Academic Program Goals for Engagement and Social Responsibility most salient to this requirement:

- a) Understand the multiple contexts (e.g., cultural, ethnic, racial, national, socioeconomic, religious, biological, etc.) that shape our constructions of human differences.
- b) Recognize how hierarchies and disparities shape and are shaped by institutions and social relations.

Your rationale and supporting materials should demonstrate to CC how your course will substantially address either a) or a) plus b) throughout the semester.

Course content should substantially meet one or more of the guidelines below:

DE courses span all units of analysis and are designed to:

- provide students opportunities to develop knowledge of how social differences are created, maintained, and challenged, with emphasis on questions of social power;
- invite students to explore how the construction of difference is often linked to histories and experiences of injustice in the United States and global contexts;
- offer sustained insight into the social and cultural practices, or modes of artistic expression, of different states or regions;
- enhance student understanding of different religious traditions and the philosophic underpinnings of different global cultures;

- foster global awareness by focusing on social practices, structures, and histories of cultures and nations outside of the United States;
- empower students with the theoretical frameworks, intellectual tools and learning experiences to critically reflect on their own participation and action in a diverse and interconnected world.

III. Guidelines to be used for CUE Courses

Culminating Undergraduate Experiences are the purview of departments and programs. Each department or program will designate a CUE (or CUEs) in the major that is credit-bearing or embedded within a credit-bearing experience and that meets the following learning goals.

Learning Goals for CUEs

Students will:

1. Demonstrate competence in their field of study at an appropriate level as determined by the department/program

2. Practice integrative and applied learning

Integration can be conceptualized in a number of ways, including but not limited to the following:

- Integration and application of learning from general education courses with learning within the major (Nichols, 1992).
- Integration of various subfields within a discipline (Morely, 1992).
- Integration of theoretical concepts and empirical evidence (Davis, 1993).
- Integration of theoretical concepts with methodological considerations (Smith, 1993).
- Integration of knowledge from various disciplines in light of complex ethical or social issues.

3. Construct a bridge between past learning experiences and the future

Constructing a bridge can be conceptualized in a number of ways, including but not limited to the following:

- Making connections between the topic of focused study and real-world problems and questions that will continue to engage students after they leave Muhlenberg.
- Making connections between the student's academic problem or topic of study and the wider community; helping students identify links between academic life and service.
- Preparing students for the world of work or for post-graduate education.
- Developing students' respect for different points of view and understanding of the relationships between global and local concerns.
- Clarifying students' own values and beliefs.

- Developing insight about the connections between a field of study and a diverse and globalized world.

The following are examples of student work that departments and programs might consider using to evaluate whether students have met the learning objectives for CUEs:

- Final paper, project, or performance
- Reflection essay
- Oral presentation
- Poster presentation
- Portfolio
- Journal
- Major field test or local exam
- Exam questions
- Products associated with internships or service learning experiences
- Other academic assignments