Criteria
for Categorical Requirements in
the Liberal Education for the Environment & Society Program

Foundational Skills—Writing Intensive Courses

Courses approved for this category will . . .

*develop a student's ability to compose written documents that communicate information, ideas, and arguments with clarity and in a style appropriate for the purposes and contexts of the documents;

* include graded assignments that require students to engage the material of the course through the composition of written documents appropriate to the discipline of the course (e.g. lab reports, literature reviews, essays, research papers, etc.);

* provide models, rubrics, or individual feedback that helps students understand how their writing might be improved;

* offer opportunities for students to improve their performance on writing assignments through revision or subsequent assignments that build on earlier assignments.

Foundation Skills—Mathematical Skills

Courses approved for this category will develop a student's ability to . . .

*communicate mathematical information symbolically, visually, numerically, and verbally;

*use statistical or mathematical models in solving problems.

Disciplinary Learning—Natural Sciences

Courses approved for this category will . . .

* be taught from perspectives and theoretical foundations consistent with natural science disciplines, and

* develop a student's ability to . . .

  * understand the ways of knowing that define the discipline of the course;
  * apply scientific methodologies in the investigation of natural phenomena;
  * think critically about the validity of conclusions that are based on statistical or mathematical models;
  * evaluate the credibility of sources and the validity of information from the course's disciplinary perspective;
  * construct and evaluate logical arguments;
  * facilitate understanding through analyses that separate problems, experiences, or arguments into constituent parts for individual study;
  * integrate knowledge, theories, and information from several sources into an understanding of an event, experience, or problem.

Disciplinary Learning—Social Sciences

Courses approved for this category will . . .

* be taught from perspectives and theoretical foundations consistent with social science disciplines, and

* develop a student's ability to . . .

  * understand the ways of knowing that define the discipline of the course;
  * recognize how individual and cultural ideals; values, and beliefs can influence private and public perceptions and actions;
  * apply scientific methodologies in the investigation of social phenomena;

* evaluate the credibility of sources and the validity of information from the course's disciplinary perspective;
* construct and evaluate logical arguments;
* facilitate understanding through analyses that separate problems, experiences, or arguments into constituent parts for individual study;
* integrate knowledge, theories, and information from several sources into an understanding of an event, experience, or problem.

Disciplinary Learning—Arts & Humanities

Courses approved for this category will . . .
* be taught from perspectives and theoretical foundations consistent with arts and humanities disciplines, and
* develop a student's ability to . . .
    * understand the ways of knowing that define the discipline of the course;
    * create or interpret metaphorical, symbolic, or artistic expressions of human experience;
    * recognize how individual or cultural ideals, values, or beliefs can influence private or public perceptions and actions;
    * evaluate the credibility of sources and the validity of information from the course's disciplinary perspective;
    * construct and evaluate logical arguments;
    * facilitate understanding through analyses that separate problems, experiences, or arguments into constituent parts for individual study;
    * integrate knowledge, theories, and information from several sources into an understanding of an event, experience, or problem.

Understanding of Cultural Diversity and Justice

Courses approved for this category will . . .
* focus on cultural diversity or justice as an integral component of their curricula, and
* develop a student's ability to . . .
    * explain how personal or cultural beliefs, artistic expressions, institutions, behaviors, or the experiences of others differs from or connects with their own;
    * act with understanding and integrity on issues of diversity;
    * identify individual, collective, or institutional acts of discrimination and explain how these acts create barriers to social justice.

Environmental Narratives

Courses approved for this category will . . .
* focus on narratives that individuals or cultures have created to describe, understand, or justify their relationships and interactions with the natural world, and
*develop a student's ability to . . .
    *recognize, understand, or critique environmental narratives;
    *understand the development of attitudes or values expressed by humans toward the natural world;
    *act with understanding and integrity on issues related to ecological sustainability.

Science of Environmental Issues

Courses approved for this category will . . .
* emphasize a scientific perspective on the environment, and
* develop a student's ability to . . .
    * apply scientific methodologies to investigations, analyses, quantitative procedures, or understandings of environmental issues;
    * explain functions or interdependences within and among earth's environmental systems;
    * act with understanding and integrity on issues related to ecological sustainability.

Communities, Policies, and Management of Environmental Issues

    Courses approved for this category will . . .

    * focus on the role that communities, governments, organizations, or groups play in environmental issues, and

    * develop a student's ability to . . .

        * understand how communities, governments, organizations or groups function;

        * appreciate how communities, governments, organizations, or groups might contribute to environmental issues or their resolutions;

        * understand the development of attitudes or values expressed by humans toward the natural world;

        * act with understanding and integrity on issues related to ecological sustainability.

Environmental Applications

    Courses approved for this category will . . .

    * integrate intellectual inquiry with emotional, social, or physical engagement in nature or environmental issues, and

    * develop a student's ability to . . .

        * appreciate ways of knowing and understanding beyond those grounded solely in intellectual approaches;

        * integrate theoretical and applied learning when addressing complex questions or issues;

        * understand the development of attitudes and values expressed by humans toward the natural world;

        * utilize multi-disciplinary perspectives to address analyses of or solutions to environmental concerns;

        * act with understanding and integrity on issues related to ecological sustainability.