

# GECC Humanities and Fine Arts Course Approval Criteria

## Course Information

Submission materials should include a representative instructor syllabus which must provide:

1. Course Description
2. Textbooks or reading resources - see information below
3. Course objectives
4. Student learning outcomes
5. Detailed Weekly Topical outline/schedule – This outline/schedule should go beyond textbook chapter numbers and titles and specify topics being covered.
6. Methods of evaluation of student learning directly linked to course objectives and outcomes
7. Grading scale reflecting the weight of assignments or evaluation categories.
8. Explanation of writing component within course content. Successful completion of formal writing assignments is necessary for successful completion of the course. This must be reflected in the grading scale. (See Writing Requirements section)
9. Syllabi, including foreign language courses, should be fully documented in English. Foreign Language courses with information in the target language risk being returned if the panel members cannot read the syllabus.

## Course Description

Please provide complete catalog copy for this course. If this course has a prerequisite that has not been approved for inclusion in the IAI GECC, please provide complete catalog copy for that course.

Because critical thinking, investigation, and reflection are necessary to the study of the humanities and fine arts, these processes--as embodied in writing (essays and essay examinations) -- are a significant component of humanities and fine arts courses.

## Prerequisites

- The panel does not generally accept courses with prerequisites, with the following exceptions.
  - If the course is the second in a two-course sequence, the panel will accept the first course in the sequence as a prerequisite.
  - If the course prerequisite is all or part of the General Education Core Curriculum writing sequence (i.e. C1 900/R and C1 901/R) because all humanities and fine arts courses require writing
- Multiple prerequisites that indicate a course is an advanced course are unacceptable.
- Courses or prerequisites that are restricted only to majors are unacceptable.

## Delivery Modes

- Please identify how the course material is to be presented (i.e., online, lecture, hybrid).

## Textbooks/Learning Resources

- Please provide a citation for a course-appropriate textbook. Textbook information may provide evidence of course content and focus. Texts reflect and support writing, speaking, or course content outcomes and requirements. As institutions pursue the opportunity to expand into online/open resource electronic text material, the panel has

sought to provide some necessary guidance on citing these learning resources in submitted syllabi and documents. If any online reading or resource materials are used, provide accessible evidence which may be a complete working url or bibliographic citation. This site/resource must be active, working, and viewable by the panel. Active hyperlinks are acceptable but cannot be embedded in an online learning system.

### Student Learning Outcomes

- Outcome information may provide evidence of the content and rigor of the course. Evaluation methods should be directly tied to the student learning outcomes.

### Assignments

- Information on the nature of all assignments is required. Special attention should be paid to providing clear information concerning the nature and extent of writing assignments.

### Writing Requirements

- Writing information should be detailed and included either as separate document or a clear section of the syllabus. Formal writing **must be present in assessed** components of the course for IAI approval. **Written components** must be described in the syllabus and be clearly reflected in the grading scale. The nature and extent, **breadth and scope** of the writing **required within the course** should be meaningful and intentionally integrated with the subject matter. Writing components may include, but are not limited to: reaction papers, journals, essay questions on exams or class assignments, extended blogs/ discussion posts, and research papers. *Extended blogs/discussion posts are defined as those that are significant and part of the assessed writing required in the course. Formal writing is defined as writing that articulates an idea in a critical manner with consideration of the discipline and academic level of the course.*

### Evaluation

- A grading scale should be provided that indicates the relative weight of assignments or evaluation categories (i.e., exams, essays, presentations, etc.).
- In addition to providing a sense of the scope and rigor of the course, this information is important to the panel's evaluation of writing as an integral component of the course.

### Discipline Specific Concerns

- Skills based courses
  - Courses such as those commonly found in the Fine or Performance Arts and Foreign Language that focus on skills acquisition or refinement are generally not acceptable for General Education credit.
- Interdisciplinary Courses
  - In order to qualify as an interdisciplinary course, the course must incorporate methodologies from both or all of the disciplines involved. Courses in which a single discipline's methodologies are used to examine subjects within another discipline (such as a historiographic examination of fine arts) is not considered interdisciplinary.
- Topics Courses

- Topics courses are generally not appropriate for General Education credit as they lack a broad approach to general topics.
- Lab Requirements
  - Humanities and Fine Arts courses normally do not require laboratory work.
- English Literature
  - Full surveys have traditionally been acceptable in British Literature I and American Literature I descriptions.
- History Courses
  - In submitting a history course for IAI GECC approval, an institution shall make its own decision as to whether the proposed course should be submitted to the Humanities and Fine Arts or the Social and Behavioral Sciences panel. The Humanities and Fine Arts panel will normally accept the decision of the submitting institution.
  - Institutions are invited, however, to note the following points:
    - Provision for two-course sequences treating the history of various nations, regions, and civilizations chronologically is more ample under the Social and Behavioral Sciences rubric. The two-course sequences in Western Civilizations and U.S. History and Civilization stress that focus will be on intellectual and cultural development, landmark documents, and artifacts.
    - Neither the fact of chronological sequences nor the presence of political history in a particular course disqualifies it from consideration by the Humanities and Fine Arts panel.
  - Chronological span for Western or World civilization sequence must be from the beginning of written documents to the present. The present is defined as within 10 years of the date the course is being offered.
  - U.S. History should begin no later than the Age of Exploration and end in the present. The present is defined as within 10 years of the date the course is being offered.
  - World Civilization courses must be global in scope.

Addition Information regarding history courses submitted to the panel. Information suggested/supplied by History major panel:

### **History Course Assessment Criteria**

The study of history exposes students to the complexities of human nature and the development of diverse cultures, values, institutions, and major events. Upon satisfactory completion of one or more history courses, students will:

- distinguish between primary and secondary sources as the foundation of modern historical scholarship:
- interpret primary sources critically by analyzing their historical contexts

- formulate historical interpretations, both orally and in writing, and defend them critically with reference to primary and secondary sources:
- incorporate into historical interpretation, both orally and in writing, an understanding of historical causation reflecting a) knowledge of important figures and events and their chronological relationship to each other and b) an awareness of the contingent relationships among social, political, religious, intellectual, cultural and economic variables;
- acquire at one and the same time a comprehension of diverse cultures and of shared humanity, as evidenced both orally and in writing.

*We direct both teachers and students of history to the National History Project's delineation of "History's Habits of the Mind" as a guide to the discipline's expectations for "interpretation".*

*These are Learning Outcomes for the Core History Courses as identified by various sources. See below for references.*

### **History's Habits of the Mind**

The perspectives and modes of thoughtful judgment derived from the study of history are many, and they ought to be its principal aim. Courses in history, geography, and government should be designed to take students well beyond formal skills of critical thinking, to help them through their own learning to:

1. understand the significance of the past to their own lives, both private and public, and to their society.
2. distinguish between the important and the inconsequential, to develop the "discriminating memory" needed for a discerning judgment in public and personal life.
3. perceive past events and issues as they were experienced by people at the time, to develop historical empathy as opposed to present-mindedness.
4. acquire at one and the same time a comprehension of diverse cultures and of shared humanity.
5. understand how things happen and how things change, how human intentions matter, but also how their consequences are shaped by the means of carrying them out, in a tangle of purpose and process.
6. comprehend the interplay of change and continuity, and avoid assuming that either is somehow more natural, or more to be expected, than the other.
7. prepare to live with uncertainties and exasperating, even perilous, unfinished business, realizing that not all problems have solutions.

8. grasp the complexity of historical causation, respect particularity, and avoid excessively abstract generalizations.
9. appreciate the often-tentative nature of judgments about the past, and thereby avoid the temptation to seize upon particular "lessons" or history as cures for present ills.
10. recognize the importance of individuals who have made a difference in history, and the significance of personal character for both good and ill.
11. appreciate the force of the non-rational, the irrational, the accidental, in history and human affairs.
12. understand the relationship between geography and history as a matrix of time and place, and as context for events.
13. read widely and critically in order to recognize the difference between fact and conjecture, between evidence and assertion, and thereby to frame useful questions.

Habits of Mind taken from:

*Bradley Commission on History in Schools. Building a History Curriculum: Guidelines for Teaching History in Schools. Westlake, OH: National Council for History Education, 1995. p. 9.*

[National Council for History Education, Inc.](https://www.nche.org/)

- Logic Courses
  - There is a distinction between logic courses with a humanistic nature and logic courses with a mathematical nature. For consideration by this Panel, courses should utilize a humanistic approach to the study of logic.
- General Coding Practice
  - A course can only be assigned to one code/description. However, multiple courses from the same institution may be assigned the same code/description.
  - Courses from the same identifier may be counted for completion of the GECC package. Students at schools on a quarter calendar may need to complete two courses to equate to a one-semester course – a common equivalency is three quarter-credit courses for two semester-credit courses.

#### Common Reasons Courses Are Not Approved

- Course does not match description
- Course is not lower division.
  - Each institution has devised its own course-numbering system. Some institutions identify as matches courses that appear to be upper-division (generally with 300 or 400 numbers). So long as these courses do not

require prerequisites, such courses may be allowed. However, if the course is clearly upper division (for juniors, seniors or graduate students only), the panel generally does not accept it.

- Course is not broad in scope
  - Special or variable Topics Courses are not considered matches to any description since the topic can vary from offering to offering.
- Course has inappropriate prerequisites
  - Please see section on prerequisites above.
- Course includes skills-based assignments or assumes a skills-based prerequisite.

### **Common Reasons Submissions Are Returned for Additional Information**

- Materials do not contain enough detail, typically:
  - Not enough information about the writing assignments
    - The Panel cannot determine the nature of the writing assignments
    - The Panel is unsure how much writing is required
    - The Panel is unsure how much weight is given to the writing assignments
  - Not enough detail is provided in the topical outline
  - There is no indication of the nature and weight of evaluations
  - Course is a better fit in a different category. In these cases, the Panel will usually suggest an alternative category.

### Specific Course Considerations

- H4 904 Ethics is a broad-based ethics course; applied or professional ethics courses are not acceptable.
- H2 903N Non-Western Civilizations and H4 903N Non-Western Philosophy: Courses on the history or culture of a single country, such as Japan, generally do not match non- Western courses that require study of more than one culture. To be considered non- European, courses on the history or culture of China, Russia, Latin America, and Africa, for example, must include more than one culture/time period.
- F1 900 Music Appreciation and F1 901 Music History and Literature I and F1 902 Music History and Literature II are not acceptable if they require score reading or a background in music performance skills or theory.
- Art, music, and theater fundamentals courses that are skills oriented are not acceptable as appreciation courses (F9 900, F1 900, F1 906, F1 907, F2 900, F2 905).
- H1 900 Foreign Language IV; 4th semester and above foreign language courses need to include a cultural component (e.g., literature, art, music, theater, film, etc.) to qualify as a Humanities course, as do all other Humanities course.