LIBERAL STUDIES COURSE DEVELOPMENT & SUBMISSION GUIDE
# Liberal Studies Course Development and Submission Guide

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1 \textbf{THE LIBERAL STUDIES FOR THE 21\textsuperscript{ST} CENTURY CURRICULUM}

1.1 Introduction
This guide provides information about the Liberal Studies for the 21\textsuperscript{st} Century program at FSU with a specific focus on developing courses for Liberal Studies. The guide begins with information about the curriculum itself, followed by a primer on course and syllabus development which will help you develop a course ready for the Liberal Studies review process. Steps in the submission and review process are outlined with screenshots and helpful tips. As always, you can contact staff in Liberal Studies for assistance as you work to develop or re-vamp your courses, or make your way through the course review and approval process.

1.2 Mission of Liberal Studies for the 21\textsuperscript{st} Century at FSU
In keeping with the mission of Florida State University “to instill the strength, skill, and character essential for lifelong learning, personal responsibility, and sustained achievement within a community that fosters free inquiry and embraces diversity,” it is the mission of the \textit{Liberal Studies for the 21\textsuperscript{st} Century} curriculum to provide a broad and interdisciplinary educational foundation for FSU students, focusing on the intellectual, practical, social, and ethical capacities essential for leading productive, engaged, and enlightened lives. Not only does this provide students with a strong foundation upon which to build a successful academic program of studies within their majors, by exposing students to the perspectives and methods of an array of fields outside of their major, the curriculum is designed to help students develop higher-order and critical thinking, intellectual flexibility, a sense of inquiry, and information literacy and fluency, regardless of their major or background.

Thus the \textit{Liberal Studies for the 21st Century} curriculum builds an educational foundation that will enable FSU graduates to thrive intellectually and materially and to engage critically and effectively in their communities. Through its various components, the curriculum provides a comprehensive intellectual foundation and transformative educational experience, helping FSU students to become:

- Analytical and flexible thinkers and life-long learners;
- Critical analysts of quantitative and logical claims;
- Critical readers and clear, creative, and convincing communicators;
- Critical analysts of theories and evidence about social and historical events, forces, and experience;
- Thoughtful patrons of and participants in cultural practices;
- Ethically engaged citizens and logical thinkers;
- Effective interpreters of scientific results and critical analysts of claims about the natural world;
- Critical thinkers, creative users of knowledge, and independent learners;
- Culturally conscious participants in a global community;
- Culturally literate members of a society; and
- Flexible and proficient written and oral communicators for professional purposes.

### 1.3 Structure of the Curriculum

#### 1.3.1 Broad Overview

The Liberal Studies curriculum is structured into two divisions: General Education, and University-Wide Graduation Requirements. Students must complete 36 credit hours of General Education coursework distributed across seven broad disciplinary areas. Statewide core requirements comprise 15 of those credits, with additional FSU requirements making up the remaining 21. One of the courses used to satisfy General Education requirements will be an E-Series course. Courses used to satisfy the University-Wide Graduation Requirements may also satisfy General Education requirements. The following tables summarize student requirements.

*Figure 1. FSU General Education and University-Wide Requirements for Students*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FSU GENERAL EDUCATION (36 Hours)</th>
<th>An overall 2.0 average or better is required on all coursework used to satisfy the General Education requirements.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>General Education Area</td>
<td>Total Credit Hours Required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quantitative and Logical Thinking C– grade or higher</td>
<td>6 credit hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English Composition C– grade or higher</td>
<td>6 credit hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Sciences</td>
<td>6 credit hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>History</td>
<td>6 credit hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Humanities and Cultural Practice</td>
<td>6 credit hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethics</td>
<td>6 credit hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Natural Sciences</td>
<td>6 credit hours</td>
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<tr>
<td>General Education Electives</td>
<td>6 credit hours</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>UNIVERSITY-WIDE GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All courses below must be completed with a C– grade or higher. Some may also count within General Education.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course Type</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;W&quot; (State-Mandated Writing)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Civic Literacy | POS 1041, AMH 2020, or satisfied by assessment
Scholarship in Practice (SIP) | 1 course
Formative Experience | 1 course (may be substituted with a second SIP)
Diversity | 1 Cross-Cultural Studies (X) course
| 1 Diversity in Western Experience (Y) course
Natural Sciences Laboratory | 1 credit hour
Upper-Division Writing | 1 course
Oral Communication Competency | 1 course
Computer Competency | 1 course

1.3.2 General Education Requirements

**E-Series**
E-Series courses are designed to help students become competent analytical and flexible thinkers and lifelong learners. In these courses, students will focus on significant questions relevant to humanity and our natural world that can be engaged, explored, and examined using multiple perspectives from within a field or across disciplinary areas. Students must complete at least one General Education course that, in addition to the relevant area designation, is also designated as an E-Series course. All E-Series courses count toward the “W” (State-Mandated Writing) requirement.

**Quantitative and Logical Thinking**
These courses are designed to help students become critical analysts of quantitative and logical claims. At least three of the six hours in this area must be in the Department of Mathematics, but the other three may be taken in departments that cultivate these skills through other disciplinary approaches (e.g., philosophy, statistics, scientific computing, etc.).

**English Composition**
These courses are designed to help students become critical readers and clear, creative, and convincing communicators. Students fulfill this requirement by taking ENC 1101 and ENC 2135 Research, Genre, and Context.

**Social Sciences**
These courses are designed to help students become critical analyzers of theories and evidence about social forces and social experience. Students must take at least one course.

**History**
These courses are designed to help students become critical analyzers of theories and evidence about historical events and forces. Students must take at least one course.

**Humanities and Cultural Practice**
These courses are designed to help students become thoughtful patrons of and participants in cultural practices. These expose students to a wide range of humanities topics and disciplines. Students must take at least one Humanities & Cultural Practice course.
**Ethics**
These courses are designed to help students become ethically engaged citizens and logical thinkers. Students must complete at least one Ethics course.

**Natural Sciences**
These courses are designed to help students become effective interpreter of scientific results and a critical analyst of claims about the natural world.

**General Education Electives**
To gain broader exposure and complete their 36 required credit hours of general education coursework, students select two additional courses from the lists of approved Social Sciences, History, Humanities and Cultural Practice, Ethics, Natural Sciences, or Scholarship in Practice courses.

**1.3.3 University-Wide Graduation Requirements**

**“W” (State-Mandated Writing)**
To satisfy state mandates for college-level writing, these courses build upon the foundation laid by English Composition coursework to further help students become clear, creative, and convincing communicators. Students may complete this requirement by completing either two E-Series courses or one E-Series course and one approved “W” course.

**Scholarly and Formative Experiences**
Scholarship in Practice (SIP) courses are designed to help students become critical thinkers, creative users of knowledge, and independent thinkers. Formative Experience (FE) opportunities advance the same goals by engaging students in independent immersive experiential learning in settings outside that classroom that are relevant to their education, professional, and life goals. Students must complete one Scholarship in Practice course and one Formative Experience. Students may substitute a second Scholarship in Practice course for the Formative Experience.

**Diversity Requirement**
The Diversity requirement is designed to help students become culturally conscious participants in a global community and culturally literate members of society. Courses fall into either the Cross-Cultural Studies (X) category or the Diversity in Western Experience (Y) category. Students must complete one of both.

**Natural Sciences Laboratory Requirement**
To provide all students experience working with natural sciences concepts in an applied setting, students must complete at least one credit hour in a Natural Sciences laboratory course.

**Oral Communication Competency Requirement**
These courses are designed to help students become flexible and proficient oral communicators for professional purposes. Some emphasize generic public speaking skills, and others are situated more specifically within a particular professional or disciplinary context. Students must complete at least one of these courses.
Computer Competency Requirement
Students must complete at least one course designated as meeting the Computer Competency Requirement. The specific courses that will fulfill this requirement depend upon the student’s major.

Upper-Division Writing Requirement
These courses are designed to help students become flexible and proficient writers for professional purposes. All students must complete at least one of these courses, usually but not necessarily as part of their upper-level coursework within their major.

Civic Literacy Requirement
The Civic Literacy requirement is a state mandate effective with the 2018–2019 academic year. Means for satisfying this requirement are dictated by the state. Students can satisfy the Civic Literacy requirement by doing one of the following:

- completing either POS1041 American National Government or AMH2020 A History of the United States Since 1877 with a grade of "C-" or higher;
- receiving credit for either POS1041 or AMH2020 or through completion of one or more of the following:
  - Advanced Placement Government and Politics: United States exam with a score of 3 or more.
  - Advanced Placement United States History exam with a score of 4 or more.
  - CLEP American Government exam with a score of 50 or more; or by
- obtaining a score of 60 out of 100 on the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services Naturalization Test, which will be administered at the Testing Center at Florida State University.

More information can be found online at http://liberalstudies.fsu.edu/civic-literacy.html
2 A SHORT GUIDE TO COURSE DESIGN

2.1 Overview and Backward Design

Teaching is a two-part enterprise. The various teacher-student interactions over the course of a semester comprise the obvious, visible parts of teaching, but equally important is the background work of designing the course. A well-designed course can create learning experiences for students that will allow instructors to have lasting positive impacts on their students.

A well-designed course will have three broad components that align with each other to create a well-integrated whole:

1. clear learning goals stated as objectives/outcomes;
2. effective assessments; and
3. teaching and learning activities to support these.

An effective way to create a course that effectively integrates these components is to adopt a backward design process. With a backward design strategy, the instructor begins by considering what the end result of the entire learning process will be. These are the learning goals of the course. Without establishing clear learning goals to work towards, it is difficult to construct a coherent, purposeful course that will enable students to achieve something meaningful.

Once these objectives have been defined, instructors must ask themselves, how will I know if students have met these goals? This is a question of assessment—what will students do to provide evidence that they have met these objectives, and how will instructors evaluate students’ performance as satisfactory or not? These assessments serve as the essential basis for grading in the course, but more importantly, they provide the students with invaluable feedback on their progress toward the learning goals.

The last stage is to work out the details of the teaching and learning activities that will happen during the course that will enable students to succeed on the assessments. These activities can include lectures and readings, but they should also include activities that invite the students to actively engage with and experience the course content.

A disconnect between any two of these will undermine the effectiveness of the course and lead to a less-than-optimal experience for students and instructors alike. But when these components are aligned and in harmony with the broader context of the course’s position within the entire curriculum and university environment, the structure of the course itself will help facilitate a high-quality and rewarding educational experience.

2.2 Learning Goals

The place to begin is by determining the essential learning goals for the course. It may be helpful to consider the following questions:

- What do you want your students to know?
- What do you want your students to care or think about?
• What do you want your students to be able to do as a result of their learning in
  the course?
• What goals might the students themselves have?
• What does the department expect as well?
• What is expected from the Liberal Studies program?

Having a clear picture of your core learning goals can help you to establish the ultimate outcomes you envision for students who complete your course.

These goals can be sketched out by going through three successive phases of development:

1. Considering the broader situational context of the course and the students;
2. Formulating underlying goals for the course that will lead to a significant learning experience for the students; and
3. Articulating these goals as clear learning objectives that will guide the teaching and assessment.

2.2.1 Situational Context
Before determining the learning goals for a course, take stock of the context in which the course will be taught. Consider such things as:

• Who will these students be, why are they taking this course, and what are their goals and expectations?
• Where will this course fit within the students’ overall university experience? What courses will the students have already taken, and for what subsequent courses should this one prepare them?
• What existing knowledge, misconceptions, skills, weaknesses, and expectations will they bring with them?
• What are the expectations on this course as determined by the university, department, discipline, or society?
• What will the size of the classes be, and in what physical spaces will the learning take place?

Obviously, instructors have very little control over these and other situational factors, but these factors will shape the reality of the course experience for both students and instructors. It is critical to take these into account when establishing the goals and designing the course.

2.2.2 Goals for Significant Learning
Once you have analyzed the broader context in which the course will exist, decide what students should take out of the course. This is a much bigger question than simply defining the content of the course by listing topics. Faculty members and instructors are professional experts in disciplinary content, but it is helpful to keep in mind that we are teaching students, not topics. L. Dee Fink (2013; 2007) describes six dimensions to learning that intersect and interact to create a “significant learning” experience, the sort
that can continue to impact students for years after the course has concluded. Fink proposes a taxonomy that outlines six major types of learning:

- **Foundational knowledge**: information and concepts to be understood and remembered, key perspectives or ideas to be carried forward, etc.;
- **Application**: the skills students should gain from the course, the types of critical, creative, and practical thinking they should develop, etc.;
- **Integration**: the connections students must forge among ideas within the course, between the course content and the content of other course, to the students’ own personal and professional lives, etc.;
- **Human dimensions**: what should students learn about themselves, about others, about interacting with others, etc.;
- **Caring**: the changes in values, interests, feelings, etc. that students will adapt; and
- **Learning how to learn**: how to succeed as a student in the course or university, as a student in the discipline, as an independent, lifelong learner.

The foundational knowledge category is the obvious place to begin when designing a course. Fink (2013) asserts it is helpful to remind ourselves that what we normally consider the actual “content” of a course—the core knowledge and its applications—in reality comprises only two of the six dimensions in which we should be engaging our students. As Svinicki and McKeachie (2014) state in *McKeachie’s Teaching Tips*,

> the overall course objectives involve educating students; the objective of a course is not just to cover a certain set of topics, but rather to facilitate student learning and thinking in general. … We are concerned about helping our students in a lifelong learning process; we want them to develop interest in further learning and have a base of concepts and skills that will facilitate further learning, thinking, and appreciation. Thus, in framing your goals, think about what will be meaningful to your students both now and in the future. (p. 8)

Goals for your course should move beyond a list of topics you plan to cover. They should reflect what you hope students will leave your class with and use in the future and what the university expects for student learning in Liberal Studies. The ideal for a Liberal Studies course is nothing less than to offer students a transformative educational experience.

Using the concept of significant learning, here is an example of general course goals for a hypothetical geography course formulated in terms of significant learning categories:

- **Foundational Knowledge**: Understand major geographic concepts – physical geography, human geography, scale, demographic transition, and so on.
- **Application**: Be able to find information on and analyze regional problems from a geographic perspective.
- **Integration**: Identify the interactions between geography and other realms of knowledge such as history, politics, economics, social structure, and so on.

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2 From L. Dee Fink’s “Creating Significant Learning Experiences” (2013).
• **Human Dimension:** Be able to intelligently discuss world events with other people and the impact of geography on these events.

• **Caring:** Be interested in other places of the world and want to continue learning about those places via reading, TV, the Internet, and travel.

• **Learning How to Learn:** Be able to interpret the geographic significance of new information and ideas acquired in the future.

### 2.2.3 Learning Objectives

Once the overall course goals have come into focus, these can be expressed as clear learning objectives that state what the students should be able to do at the end of a course that they could not do before. Learning objectives outline intended results of student engagement in instruction, activities, and assessments. They should be student-focused (rather than content-focused) and oriented towards specific observable behaviors that students will be expected to perform.

Well-written learning objectives should:

1. Contain an action verb that refers to the cognitive process that students will use;
2. Include an object that describes the knowledge that the students will acquire or construct; and
3. Be stated so that the outcome can be measured (ideally by more than one course assessment).

Learning objectives operationalize the overarching learning goals of the course. Therefore, it is best to express learning objectives using action-oriented verbs such as those described in Bloom’s taxonomy (see Figure 2).\(^3\) For example, rather than saying “students will understand such and such,” say instead, “students will be able to do something [because they will understand such and such].” Using the taxonomy as a reference at this stage of course development can also ensure that the objectives will engage higher-order cognitive processes (create, evaluate) rather than remaining stuck at as the foundational levels of remember and understand. These learning objectives will serve as the pillars that guide the teaching and assessment for the entire course and will take you into the realm of crafting a significant learning experience for your students rather than merely providing them with intellectual content.

\(^3\) See [https://cft.vanderbilt.edu/guides-sub-pages/blooms-taxonomy/](https://cft.vanderbilt.edu/guides-sub-pages/blooms-taxonomy/).
Incorporating Liberal Studies Student Learning Objectives into Your Course

All Liberal Studies courses must include the required Liberal Studies learning objectives. As with all learning objectives, each of these objectives should also be measurable by course assessments. General Education learning objectives for each area are provided in section 2 beginning on page 37, and University-wide Graduation Requirements are described in section 3 beginning on page 49.

The Liberal Studies student learning objectives are written broadly so they can relate to many kinds of courses taught in many different disciplines, and students will take different courses as they make the journey through Liberal Studies into their major. It is important to consider how your course goals and learning objectives fit together with the Liberal Studies goals and learning objectives. No individual course can fulfill every aspect of the student learning objectives, but all should help students move toward achieving the goals inherent in the student learning objectives. We suggest thinking about your specific course goals and the Liberal Studies student learning objectives together as an integrated whole rather than an addition to an already-completed course. You are even encouraged to reword (within reason) the Liberal Studies student learning objectives to “contextualize and give greater meaning and clarification”\(^4\) to how the Liberal Studies goals play out in your specific course.

Hanstedt (2018) gives a great example of how instructors can move from institutional and departmental goals to a specific course goals that integrate ideas from both, and provides a starting point for measuring student learning on that objective. Hanstedt

\(^4\) From Paul Hanstedt’s book *Creating Wicked Students: Designing Courses for a Complex World*, p.36.
recommends the following steps to integrate institutional/departmental and course-specific student learning objectives (adapted for Liberal Studies at FSU):

1. Take a moment to look at the Liberal Studies competency and student learning objectives appropriate for your course.
2. Identify which of the goals that you have already created for your own course naturally align with the Liberal Studies learning objectives. Keep this alignment in mind as you flesh out the rest of our course and assessments.
3. For any Liberal Studies learning objectives that are not yet being met through your own course goals and student learning objectives, draft a few additional course goals to support these learning objectives, doing your best to meet the following standards:
   a. Require students to actively engage in course content that helps them move toward mastering the Liberal Studies goals within the context of your course and discipline;
   b. Provide measurable evidence they’ve done so through course assessments; and
   c. Work with students on a level that fulfills your greatest hopes for them.

2.3 Assessment and Feedback
Once quality learning objectives have been designed, it is helpful to answer the following question: What kinds of feedback and assessment should I provide? When designing assessments, it may be helpful to consider the following questions with respect to the situational context of the class and your learning objectives:

- What do students need to do in this course to show they have met the learning objectives?
- What kinds of assignments would best help students show what they are able to do after with what they have learned?
- Given the situational context (duration of the course, size of the class, instructional support, available technology, etc.), what is realistic so I can provide timely feedback?
- What kind of assignments will help students be successful in the future (after they leave the class)?

Broadly speaking, as assessment is any assignment or activity that provides students with an opportunity to demonstrate achievement of a learning objective. Assessments are evaluated by the instructor or TA (or perhaps electronically), typically but not necessarily for a grade. Ultimately, assessments in one form or another determine a student’s final grade for a course, but they are about more than just grading. They also provide students with essential formative feedback intended to help them improve their performance and accelerate their learning.

**Forward- and Backward-Looking Assessments**
It can be helpful to think of assessments as either forward-looking or backward-looking. Backward-looking assessments audit student learning, typically to serve as the basis for the students’ final grades. Forward-looking assessments, on the other hand, are
concerned with helping students learn better and continue developing. As Fink (2013) puts it,

Teachers using backward-looking assessment look back on what has been covered ... and in essence say to the students, “We have covered topics x, y, and z. Did you get it?” In forward-looking assessment, teachers look ahead to what they expect or want students to be able to do in the future as the result of having learned about x, y, and z. The relevant questions then becomes, “Imagine yourself in a situation when people are actually using this knowledge. Can you use your knowledge of x, y, and z to do [this]?” (p. 95)

Forward-looking, educative assessments replicate real-world situations in which the student’s knowledge and abilities will be put to the test. They have the students negotiate a complex task, asking them to do the subject rather than recite knowledge about it. The more an assessment can be situated within an authentic context, the more meaningful and impactful it will be to students.

Assessments, both forward-looking and backward-looking, take many forms—exams, papers, assignments, projects, discussions, etc.—but effective assessments should be constructed around two underlying principles:

1. Assessments should be tied directly to the learning objectives for the course; and
2. Assessments should be used to provide feedback to students, telling them how they are doing and letting them know where and how to improve.

**High-Stakes and Low-Stakes Assessments**

When designing assessments, we often think about those that are designed for grading purposes, typically with significant implications for the final course grade. These “high-stakes” assessments of student learning are focused on a product that provides measurable evidence of student learning. They are summative in nature and help students demonstrate the concepts and skills they have learned in a course.

“Low-stakes” assessments are forms of evaluation that do not impact students’ grades heavily or at all. These types of assessments are formative in nature, helping students understand how they are doing with course material and giving them an opportunity to “try out” their new knowledge or skills without a huge effect on their course grade. They can give students permission to experiment, explore, take risks, and make mistakes. These performance evaluations help students understand what they are doing well, and where they can improve. They are particularly helpful early in the semester and as instructional “scaffolding” that “help students bridge the gap between their current levels of knowledge or skill and the knowledge or skill levels we want them to attain.”5 Possible examples include:

- Quizzes given at the end of a class period or week, perhaps using interactive response systems during class
- In-class problem solving, individually or as a group
- Responses to readings or summaries focused on analyzing course materials
- Short writing assignments in response to a prompt or a discussion question

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5 [https://teaching.fsu.edu/tips/2018/01/19/scaffolds-learning-not-just-construction-sites/](https://teaching.fsu.edu/tips/2018/01/19/scaffolds-learning-not-just-construction-sites/)
• Journaling for reflection about the course and concepts, as well as one’s own learning process
• Early stages of a larger high-stakes assignments: abstracts, proposals, outlines, annotated bibliographies, drafts, etc.

2.3.1 Aligning Learning Objectives and Assessments
Assessments should be tied directly to the learning objectives for the course. Naturally, not every assessment will engage every learning objective; however, each student learning objective should be assessed (with or without a grade) more than once in a given course. Assessing objectives multiple times reinforces student learning by providing them with multiple opportunities to use foundational knowledge, and also by allowing them to exhibit growth over the course of a semester.

It may be helpful to use a hierarchical matrix to plan which assessments will measure which learning objectives and to ensure you are planning assessments for each course-specific and Liberal Studies student learning objective.

The matrix you create should be specific to your course goals, learning objectives, and related assessments. Figure three shows an example from IDS 2371, Music and Culture in London. A blank version of this matrix is available in Appendix A for your adaptation and use.

2.3.2 Feedback
Providing feedback is one of the most important aspects of teaching. It tells students how they are doing, and it lets them know where, and critically, how, to improve.

Student-centered teaching involves feedback that is regular, timely, based on appropriate criteria/standard, and substantive. It should also be delivered with care for students’ on-going academic and personal development. Grades by themselves can tell students how they are doing, but in order to provide support for success in the course and encourage future learning, instructors should provide students with further evaluation of their work and formative feedback.

Nicol and MacFarlane-Dick (2005) developed a model and principles for good feedback practice that can be adapted into prior planning for any course. Good feedback practice:

1. helps clarify what good performance is (goals, criteria, expected standards);
2. facilitates the development of self-assessment (reflection) in learning;
3. delivers high quality information to students about their learning;
4. encourages teacher and peer dialogue around learning;
5. encourages positive motivational beliefs and self-esteem;
6. provides opportunities to close the gap between current and desired performance; and
7. provides information to teachers that can be used to help shape the teaching.

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7 From L. Dee Fink’s Creating Significant Learning Experiences, 2013.
Figure 3. Aligning Your Goals, Learning Objectives, and Assessments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Goals (broad and general)</th>
<th>Student Learning Objectives (specific and assessable—what students will be able to do reflecting the course goal)</th>
<th>Assessments (how students will demonstrate achievement of each learning objective)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Help students become competent analytical and flexible thinkers and lifelong learners. (Liberal Studies E-Series course goal)</td>
<td>1. Analyze the major questions or problems in the course using various intellectual perspectives.</td>
<td>The final paper will assess students on their abilities to research and articulate aspects of national identity and culture. 50% of the paper grade is allocated to quality and content of the argument.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>In-class discussions will investigate such questions as, how do the arts reflect cultural identity and political thought? What are some ways that the arts can advocate for or reflect social change? What, if any, questions can artists pose or answer that historians and journalists cannot?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Demonstrate the relevance of ideas or findings from the course.</td>
<td>Students will give presentations on sites of historical and cultural significance to be visited.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Journal assignments will have students chronicle their experiences in daily entries that discuss what they have seen and contextualize it within the course’s intellectual framework.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. Communicate arguments central to the course using clear, coherent prose that utilizes the conventions of standard American English.</td>
<td>Journal assignments (see above).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Final paper, in which 30% of the grade is allocated for “clarity of writing and coherence of narrative.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4. Discuss relevant ideas from the course using sources from a variety of text types.</td>
<td>Final research paper requires students to integrate printed, audio, video, and online sources into their work (20% of paper grade).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Help students become thoughtful patrons of and participants in cultural practices. (Liberal Studies Humanities and Cultural Practice course goal)</td>
<td>1. Interpret intellectual or artistic works within a cultural context.</td>
<td>Student presentations on cultural sites engage notions of art and architecture within the cultural context.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Use a cultural, artistic, or philosophical approach to analyze some aspect of human experience.</td>
<td>A second student presentation requires students to analytically engage a piece of music.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Short assignments on aspects of British culture (food, vocabulary, and history) will engage students in cultural examination of human experience.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>In-class discussions will focus on this question writ large. The resulting participating and attendance grades will reflect this.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Students’ journals will function as a cultural and artistic analysis of their own experiences.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In a review of research on feedback and student performance, Svinicki and McKeachie (2014) suggest feedback should be:

- Understandable: Expressed in language that students will understand.
- Selective: Commenting on two or three things that the student can do something about.
- Specific: Pointing to examples in the student’s submission where the feedback applies.
- Timely: Provided in time to inform the next piece of work.
- Contextualized: Framed with reference to the learning objectives and assessment criteria.
- Nonjudgmental: Descriptive rather than evaluative, focused on learning goals rather than the student’s ability.
- Balanced: Pointing out the positive as well as areas in need of improvement.
- Forward-looking: Suggesting how students might improve subsequent assignments.
- Transferable: Focused on knowledge and skills students can use beyond the course, and self-regulatory abilities such as planning, monitoring one’s work, motivation, and assessing one’s work through reflection.9

Integrating assessments and feedback are key aspects of student-centered course design.

**Reflection**

Reflection—students engaging in self-assessment—is an important part of the formative feedback. Having students develop this skill is essential to their long-term success if they are to carry the lessons of the course with them once they are no longer under the direct care of their teacher. There are many ways to engage students in self-reflection. For example, you could ask students to evaluate their own work on similar standards you will use for grading. Alternatively, asking students to reflect on feedback they received on an assignment provides an opportunity for them to translate your feedback into their own plans for the future. Honest self-assessment helps them better analyze their effort and thinking, and these kinds of activities provide structured opportunities for self-reflection to help students better understand their performance. It can also be an opportunity to help them develop self-regulation skills (used to actively monitor one’s goals, effort, strategies, and learning) that will help them master future assessments, or perhaps think more deeply about what they learned in the process of completing an assignment.

2.3.3 Designing Assessments, Grading Criteria, and Rubrics

Once you have chosen which kinds of assessments will best allow students to apply what they are learning in class and decided what strategies you will use for feedback, it is time to formulate the details. When designing assessments, they should include specific criteria and standards. The criteria should be clear and help students understand what is expected.

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Tests, Quizzes, and Exams
Many courses use tests, quizzes, and exams to elicit and measure student performance. Often students think of tests as simply an exercise in relaying memorized facts: the kind of backward-looking assessment with which they are most familiar. Important foundational knowledge may need to be tested in this way, as basics are often necessary to move forward in a course. However, questions can also be posed that test higher level thinking or be written to ask students to apply foundational knowledge to a real problem. Tests might include well-designed questions (problems, short-answer items, essay items) that elicit the performance articulated by the student learning objectives.10

Tests are most effective as assessments if broken up into smaller, frequent tests rather than just one or two major exams per semester. If your course must rely heavily on tests, try to give one or two in the first seven weeks of a course so students can build skills early and prepare for success over the course of the semester. This assists students in developing appropriate test-related study habits and has a positive effect on student achievement.11

The following resources outline some promising practices in test or quiz design:

- Designing multiple-choice questions: https://www.edutopia.org/article/5-tips-designing-multiple-choice-quizzes
- Designing online tests: http://www.clemson.edu/online/documents/best-practices/online_test

Essays and Written Assignments
Many courses at FSU are writing-intensive and focus specifically on developing students’ writing skills, but courses across disciplines use written assignments to assess students’ abilities to connect course concepts together, to encourage creativity, or to exhibit their ability to analyze and synthesize information. Here are a few tips on designing effective written assignments:

- Explain what you want students to do in the assignment. Use specific words like analyze, synthesize, critique, etc.
- Tell them who the audience is for the paper and what genre they should employ (e.g., a report, a review, an essay).
- Outline details: how long the paper should be, formatting and style guidelines, required use of outside sources, etc.
- Develop grading criteria and a rubric based on the specifics of the assignment as they relate to the course learning objectives.

10 Svinicki and McKeachie (2014) provide wonderful tips on designing tests (Ch. 8) in McKeachie’s Teaching Tips and provide a list of supplemental reading on the subject.
11 See Basol and Johanson’s “Effectiveness of frequent testing over achievement: A meta-analysis” in the International Journal of Human Sciences, 2009.
• Set a due date, taking into account time for students to prepare through structured outlining, drafting, and/or peer review, your feedback on drafts, and how much time you will need to grade the assignment. Ask yourself, is this doable and what resources do I need to give effective feedback and timely grades?

• Build in teaching activities to prepare students for success (e.g., brainstorming and mind mapping, gathering references, short writing assignments, peer review, etc.).

*Designing Writing Assignments* by Traci Gardner is a free, open text all about designing writing assignments. It may be particularly useful to those teaching writing-intensive courses.

Teaching a large course and worried about grading? Consider using these tips to design short answer questions or one-page assignments you can do in- or out-of-class and grade quickly.

**Participation**
Providing a clear, useful, and constructive evaluation for class participation is challenging for many instructors. Engaging your class in conversation about what active participation looks like—beyond just speaking often—can help you frame your expectations and help students understand them. Participation also includes preparation for class, participation in small-group and large-group activities, and active listening. Asking students to rate their individual effort early in the semester, and giving them feedback from your vantage point, can help them improve their participation in class and grade. This example rubric exhibits some of the criteria for participation an instructor might consider. The rubric (Figure 4) could easily be adapted into a grading rubric by assigning letter grade or point values to the three levels of performance and percentage or point weights to each of the five criteria.

For online courses, participation is commonly tied to asynchronous discussion board activities, though some courses may have face-to-face meetings as part of participation. Setting ground rules for appropriate online communication and specific expectations for the course discussion, graded or ungraded, are both important. The example rubric (Figure 5) from the University of Delaware provides an example of how you can assess many aspects of participation in asynchronous discussion, not simply number of posts.

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12 Adapted from a resource provided by Dr. Alysia Roehrig Bice, FSU, in *College Teaching*
13 Adapted from [https://www1.udel.edu/janet/MARC2006/rubric.html](https://www1.udel.edu/janet/MARC2006/rubric.html)
14 Adapted from [https://www1.udel.edu/janet/MARC2006/rubric.html](https://www1.udel.edu/janet/MARC2006/rubric.html)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Evaluative Dimension</th>
<th>Above Satisfactory</th>
<th>Satisfactory</th>
<th>Unsatisfactory</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Quality of Contributions</td>
<td>Contributions are relevant and routinely integrate course reading and life experiences into the discussion; discussions are supported through course content</td>
<td>Contributions lean more toward either course readings or life experiences, but are relevant to the conversation</td>
<td>Contributions are not relevant to the conversation and rarely incorporate course readings; contributions portray a lack of preparation for class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Significance of Contributions</td>
<td>Contributions add complexity to the conversation and support or build off of others’ contributions</td>
<td>Contributions are generally substantive, but occasionally indicate a lack of attentions to what others have shared</td>
<td>Contributions repeat what others have shared and thus do not advance the conversation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Engagement</td>
<td>Regularly contributes to class in both large and small group formats; routinely engaged with course activities and/or discussions</td>
<td>Contributions generally favor either the small or large group; does not consistently appear engaged in activities and/or discussions</td>
<td>Minimal to no contributions are offered in either the small or large group; appears disengaged from activities and/or discussions; addresses core issues in activities and/or discussions quickly and shifts to personal conversations or off-topic material</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gate-Keeping</td>
<td>Does not dominate the conversation; regularly encourages the participation of others by posing questions or asking for other students’ thoughts</td>
<td>Student occasionally encourages the participation of others; recognizes the contributions of others</td>
<td>Either no minimal contributions or dominates the conversation; does not engage other students in conversation; directs majority of comments to the instructor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Listening/Attending Skills</td>
<td>Is considerate (verbally and nonverbally) of appropriately expressed feelings and opinions of others; actively listens to both peers and instructor; actively supports peers’ learning processes</td>
<td>Generally considerate (verbally and nonverbally) of appropriately expressed feelings and opinions of others; typically displays active listening; generally supports peers’ learning processes</td>
<td>Is dismissive (verbally and nonverbally) of others’ feelings and opinions or does not actively listen; displays a lack of interest; does not actively support peers’ learning process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Criteria</td>
<td>Unacceptable 0 Points</td>
<td>Acceptable 1 Point</td>
<td>Good 2 Points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>Participates not at all.</td>
<td>Participates 1-2 times on the same day.</td>
<td>Participates 3-4 times but postings not distributed throughout week.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Initial Assignment Posting</td>
<td>Posts no assignment.</td>
<td>Posts adequate assignment with superficial thought and preparation; doesn’t address all aspects of the task.</td>
<td>Posts well developed assignment that addresses all aspects of the task; lacks full development of concepts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Follow-Up Postings</td>
<td>Posts no follow-up responses to others.</td>
<td>Posts shallow contribution to discussion (e.g., agrees or disagrees); does not enrich discussion.</td>
<td>Elaborates on an existing posting with further comment or observation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Content Contribution</td>
<td>Posts information that is off-topic, incorrect, or irrelevant to discussion.</td>
<td>Repeats but does not add substantive information to the discussion.</td>
<td>Posts information that is factually correct; lacks full development of concept or thought.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Grading Rubrics
Grading rubrics can be helpful tools for assessing student work and providing specific feedback. Developing rubrics takes time, but long as you have clear ideas of what you value in your students’ work and what different levels of competence look like, you have the building blocks of an effective rubric. As Walvoord and Anderson posit in *Effective Grading*, well-designed assessments and their associated grading rubrics should provide (1) clear criteria for students and (2) a structure for grading and effective feedback.

For papers, projects, and presentations, rubrics can help with consistency in grading, especially if more than one instructor/TA is grading student work. When returning an assignment to students, providing them with a marked rubric (on hard copy or built into the course management site/Canvas) can help students understand where they earned points on the assignment and what areas have room for improvement. You may want to add an additional “feedback” field in a rubric for each criterion listed and the assignment overall, tying the grading on the rubric and your specific feedback together in one place.

To create a grading rubric, start by identifying criteria for the assessment: the “traits” on which you will evaluate student performance. These criteria should be based on observable, measurable student behaviors generally aligned with the learning objectives for the particular assessment and for the course as a whole. These evaluation criteria can also be worked into the description of the assessment you include in your syllabus.

Next, construct a scale for each criterion that expresses varying levels of student performance with respect to that criterion. These scales are usually three to five levels. For example, a typical rubric might have a scale where a level 5 indicates the student did an excellent job meeting expectations for that criterion, a 3 indicates some achievement of the expectations, and a 1 indicates the student failed to meet expectations for that criterion.

With this structure in place, create statements of expected performance at each level of the rubric specific to each criterion, and assign a number of points (or range of points) associated with the level. These descriptions will help students understand your expectations for their performance, and they help you consistently evaluate their work in regard to those expectations. The points earned per level could be consistent for every trait on the rubric, or the number of points possible per trait could vary depending on how you prioritize and weight the different criteria for your assignment.

The following example rubric (Figure 6) from an Ethics and E-Series course at FSU, *Ethics through Art*,15 shows how a faculty member designed their grading criteria with both Liberal Studies and course-specific student learning objectives in mind, expressing the criteria with levels of student performance and associated points for grading.

There are wonderful examples of rubrics for different purposes available online that can be adapted for your course. Rubrics for writing assignments are most common, but you will also find rubrics for projects, class presentations, group work, peer assessments, student self-evaluations, and class participation.

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15 Course designed by Dr. Angela Schwenkler at FSU. Full syllabus available at [http://liberalstudies.fsu.edu/documents/IFS3139.pdf](http://liberalstudies.fsu.edu/documents/IFS3139.pdf)
Assignment: This course centers around three questions: Can art contain ethical content, in a way that uniquely furthers the philosophical investigation of ethics? Can some works of art help us develop ethical awareness? Does all art by its nature have ethical content, or can art be amoral? Students will write a paper of 1500 words which articulates an answer to one of these questions. In writing the paper, students will draw on the work of two of the philosophers read during that section of the course. 75% of the student’s grade on the paper will be determined by their achievement of the E-series and Ethics competencies (rubric below), and 25% will be determined by their achievement on the Writing competency rubric.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Competency: High achievement</th>
<th>Excellent</th>
<th>Adequate</th>
<th>Inadequate</th>
<th>Poor</th>
<th>Point total for competency:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>This paper answers the question at hand using the works of two philosophers whose views constitute two different positions about the relationship between ethics and art. (E-Series 1, Ethics 1)</td>
<td>Papers in this category pick appropriate philosophers with appropriately different views. (10 points)</td>
<td>Papers in this category might pick two philosophers whose views are not significantly different. (7.5 points)</td>
<td>Papers in this category might only discuss one philosopher. (5 points)</td>
<td>Papers in this category fail to discuss any philosopher in a meaningful way. (0-4 points)</td>
<td>/10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>This paper effectively communicates the arguments of the first philosopher it discusses. (E-Series 3)</td>
<td>Papers in this category explain the argument in premise/conclusion form and assess at least one strength and one weakness. (18-20 points)</td>
<td>Papers in this category attempt to explain the argument in premise/conclusion form but make a mistake in presentation, or papers in this category fail to assess a strength and weakness of the argument. (11-17 points)</td>
<td>Papers in this category mention an argument but fail to explain it in premise/conclusion form, and fail to assess a strength and weakness. (5-10 points)</td>
<td>Papers in this category do not present an argument from the philosopher under discussion. (0-4 points)</td>
<td>/20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| This paper effectively communicates the arguments of the second philosopher it discusses.  
(E-Series 3) | Papers in this category explain the argument in premise/conclusion form and assess at least one strength and one weakness. (18-20 points) | Papers in this category attempt to explain the argument in premise/conclusion form but make a mistake in presentation, or papers in this category fail to assess a strength and weakness of the argument. (11-17 points) | Papers in this category mention an argument but fail to explain it in premise/conclusion form, and fail to assess a strength and weakness. (5-10 points) | Papers in this category do not present an argument from the philosopher under discussion. (0-4 points) | /20 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| This paper incorporates an interpretation of at least one work of art in its answer to the question at hand.  
(E-Series 4) | Papers in this category both present the artwork in significant detail and explain its relevance to the question at hand. | Papers in this category either present the artwork in significant detail or explain its relevance to the question at hand, leaving this part of the paper with significant weaknesses. | Papers in this category mention an artwork, but without presenting it in much detail and without fully explaining its relevance. | Papers in this category either do not mention an artwork or do so in a very cursory manner. | /20 |
| The paper displays awareness of the importance of historical, social, and cultural contexts by including in its interpretation of the work of art or its presentation of philosophical arguments at least a brief discussion of the historical, social, or cultural context of the work or arguments.  
(Ethics 2) | Papers in this category provide a 2-3 sentence discussion that explains the relevance if the historical, social, or cultural contexts of the text for the discussion of the paper. (5 points) | Papers in this category provide a 1-3 sentence discussion of the historical, social, or cultural contexts of the text at hand, but their discussion is either too brief or seems irrelevant. (3-4 points) | Papers in this category mention only in passing some fact about the historical, social, or cultural context of the text at hand. (1-2 points) | Papers in this category fail to give any discussion of the historical, social, or cultural contexts for any of the texts under discussion in the paper. (0 points) | /5 |
2.4 Teaching and Learning Activities

Once you have formulated learning goals, student learning objectives, and designed assessments for your course, you have the basics you need to identify meaningful teaching and learning activities for your course. Teaching and learning activities should be selected that best facilitate learning and help students meet the objectives. Fink (2013) suggests answering the following questions at this stage:

- What will the students actually do (the learning activities) in the course?
- What will you do (the teaching activities) to make significant learning happen?

2.4.1 Active Learning

Many Liberal Studies courses invite students to engage with concepts very new to them. Some students may have experience in the area, but still need additional foundational knowledge to be successful in the specific course. Often, lecture and reading course materials provide this foundational knowledge. Learning can occur from these activities as long as students are engaged in thinking about the material; however, lectures and reading assignments often ask students to take in information and internalize it with little feedback or interaction with the instructor or other students. For foundational knowledge to stick, students must be cognitively engaged in the learning process. Integrating class discussion and interactive activities into lectures can help move lectures from mere transmission of knowledge to an experience that reinforces learning and contextualizes the information presented. The same can be said for reading or watching course materials. Here are a few examples of techniques for moving mere presentation of information toward active learning that can enhance meaning-making and knowledge retention:

- Create reading guides and low-stakes reading reflection activities.
- Incorporate think-pair-share or other small group activities into lectures, asking students to work together to summarize content or revise answers to class questions.
- Incorporate interactive questions or polling into lectures using free or available technologies.

Active learning takes many forms. Even lectures can be active when facilitated along with discussion or interactive technology. Fink (2013) notes three components of active learning: experiences, getting information and ideas, and reflection that occurs in a course. These components can be infused into a course through many different types of activities. They key is to choose activities that best help you facilitate learning. This figure from Fink exhibits some activities that promote active learning:

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Svinicki and McKeachie (2014) suggest learning more about specific active learning skills and strategies that may be effective for your subject, such as:

- **Group-based learning**: Examples include think-pair-share, peer teaching, team activities, debates, online or in-person group work, learning communities.\(^ {17} \)

- **Experiential learning**: A broad term for learning activities in and beyond the classroom in which students have hands-on experiences to reinforce classroom learning. Experiential learning activities might include role-playing, service-learning, creative works and projects, conducting research, or laboratory exercises.

- **Case-based teaching**: Students discuss narratives, situations, data, or real-life scenarios in which they use what they are learning in class to “solve” the case. Activities are discussion-based and focused on contextual learning. Students grapple with “how” and “why”.\(^ {18} \)

- **Problem-based learning**: An inquiry-based instructional model where learners engaged with real-life problems that require further research. Students identify gaps in their knowledge, build research skills, and cultivate problem solving as

\(^ {17} \) Resources on group work:
for small-group-work/

How to Improve Group Work: Perspectives from Students from Faculty Focus: [https://www.facultyfocus.com/articles/teaching-and-learning/how-to-improve-group-work-perspectives-from-students/](https://www.facultyfocus.com/articles/teaching-and-learning/how-to-improve-group-work-perspectives-from-students/)

\(^ {18} \) Adapted from [https://citl.illinois.edu/citl-101/teaching-learning/resources/teaching-strategies/the-case-method](https://citl.illinois.edu/citl-101/teaching-learning/resources/teaching-strategies/the-case-method); also visit [http://sciencecases.lib.buffalo.edu/cs/](http://sciencecases.lib.buffalo.edu/cs/) for resources specific to case-based learning in the sciences
they study and grapple with the issue. This can be constructed as an individual or group project.\(^{19}\)

- **Project-based learning**: A specific form of problem-based learning in which “the emphasis is on the connection between course concepts and the world beyond the classroom”.\(^{20}\) Unlike case-based learning, the project typically lasts the entire semester and it focuses on a large, complex problem and solutions based in course content.

- **Using classroom-based or web 2.0 technologies**: At FSU, this approach commonly includes using audience response systems such as i>clicker and TurningTechnologies, though there are other web- and app-based response systems available at no- or low-cost. Useful Web 2.0 technologies for learning include online mind-mapping programs, group collaboration tools like wikis, blog development, and content curation tools.

They also provide specific suggestions for active learning in large classes, online instruction, and laboratory settings.

### 2.4.2 Selecting Teaching and Learning Activities

Given all the options, how do you choose the best teaching and learning activities for your course? This will depend on the context of your course and your learning goals. Naturally, activities should prepare students for success on the course assessments you have designed. They could even be “low-stakes” assessments in and of themselves. However, do not lose sight of the overarching goals for significant learning you established for your course, especially those in the four types of learning that frequently are less likely to receive attention in course design: integration, the human dimension, caring, and learning how to learn (see section 2.2.2 on page 9). Your various teaching and learning activities are where you can directly address goals that may not have been explicitly targeted in your formal assessments, which generally focus on the remaining two types of learning: foundational knowledge and its application.\(^{21}\)

As the semester progresses, you might consider more cognitively complex activities. Low-complexity activities that do not require extensive knowledge, or on-the-spot applications like large-group discussion or think-pair-share, are most appropriate early in the semester. High-complexity activities, like inquiry learning or role playing, are more appropriate once students have the knowledge and experience to apply what they have learned.\(^{22}\) This figure from the University of Michigan and related resource provides

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\(^{20}\) From Paul Hanstedt’s *Creating Wicked Students: Designing Courses for a Complex World*, p. 60.

\(^{21}\) The K. Patricia Cross Academy has an extensive [video library of teaching techniques](http://www.crlt.umich.edu/sites/default/files/resource_files/Active%20Learning%20Continuum%20Techniques.pdf) and associated material that can be filtered by learning dimension.

\(^{22}\) From Chris O’Neal and Tershia Pinder-Grover’s resource available at [http://www.crlt.umich.edu/sites/default/files/resource_files/Active%20Learning%20Continuum%20Techniques.pdf](http://www.crlt.umich.edu/sites/default/files/resource_files/Active%20Learning%20Continuum%20Techniques.pdf)
examples of activities by level of complexity and how they can be incorporated into classes:\(^{23}\)

*Figure 8. Active Learning Techniques by Level of Complexity*

To keep yourself on track, it may be helpful to expand your matrix to align activities with your SLOs and assessments. Here is an example (Figure 9):

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# Figure 9. Aligning Your Objectives, Outcomes, Assessments, and Teaching Activities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Course Goals</strong> (broad and general)</th>
<th><strong>Student Learning Objectives</strong> (specific and assessable—what students will be able to do reflecting the course goal)</th>
<th><strong>Assessments</strong> (how students demonstrate achievement of each learning objective)</th>
<th><strong>Teaching and Learning Activities</strong> (active and passive activities that reinforce foundational knowledge and prep students for assessments—students “do” and “reflect”)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Help students become competent analytical and flexible thinkers and lifelong learners. (E-Series course goal)</td>
<td>1. Analyze the major questions or problems in the course using various intellectual perspectives.</td>
<td>The final paper will assess students on their abilities to research and articulate aspects of national identity and culture. 50% of the paper grade is allocated to quality and content of the argument.</td>
<td>In-class discussions; debates; class presentations on history and culture in London; music theater and music studies and in-person experiences attending performances in London</td>
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<td></td>
<td>In-class discussions will investigate such questions as, how do the arts reflect cultural identity and political thought? What are some ways that the arts can advocate for or reflect social change?</td>
<td>In-class discussions; debates</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Demonstrate the relevance of ideas or findings from the course.</td>
<td>Students will give presentations on sites of historical and cultural significance to be visited.</td>
<td>Journal assignments will have students chronicle their experiences in daily entries that discuss what they have seen and contextualize it within the course’s intellectual framework.</td>
<td>Small group research projects and in-class presentations, involving music analysis.</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Journal assignments (see above).</td>
<td>Reflection and analysis activity: In their journals, students will be expected to reflect on how the cultural materials studied in the course are manifest in their own experiences on the trip.</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Communicate arguments central to the course using clear, coherent prose that utilizes the conventions of standard American English.</td>
<td>Journal assignments (see above).</td>
<td>Final paper, in which 30% of the grade is allocated for “clarity of writing and coherence of narrative.”</td>
<td>Journaling (see above).</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. Discuss relevant ideas from the course using sources from a variety of text types.</td>
<td>Final research paper requires students to integrate printed, audio, video, and online sources into their work (20% of paper grade).</td>
<td>Listening and viewing media throughout the course and in-person through London experience (experiential learning).</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
2.4.3 Structuring Your Course

Finally, you are ready to integrate these ideas into a well-planned course by creating the overall structure of the course and then the syllabus.

Creating a thematic structure for the course involves looking at “the whole of the subject of the course and [identifying] the most important concepts, issues, topics, or themes” (Fink, 2013, p.142). These can then be organized into a structure for the course – often as units and then weekly/daily sessions. You should also consider which kind or organization methods best help you organize course content in way that helps students understand the relationships between ideas and details in your course content: categorical, chronological, methodological, theoretical, and/or use of course content.24

Ideally, content should build on itself from week to week, and unit to unit, so students are prepared to undertake more complex tasks and perform well on assessments. You should also determine what preparation students need before class periods (like readings, online discussions, or other activities). You can then integrate your assessments, teaching and learning activities, and class-preparation activities for students into a matrix that outlines the flow of your course. A blank matrix is included in Appendix B for your use.

Figure 10. Integrating Your Choices: A Matrix for Course Structure and Unit Design

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Major themes/content areas (units)</th>
<th>Topics addressed (weekly or by class period)</th>
<th>Student Learning Objectives (map which SLOs will be addressed)</th>
<th>Related Assessment (how students demonstrate achievement of the learning objectives)</th>
<th>Teaching and Learning Activities (active and passive; in- or out-of-class; prepare students for assessments)</th>
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</tbody>
</table>

2.5 Other Resources

In addition to the course development support provided by the FSU’s Office of Liberal Studies, the Office of Distance Learning (ODL), and Center for the Advancement of Teaching, there is an abundance of resources on all aspects of course design and

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24 From Paul Hanstedt’s Creating Wicked Students: Designing Courses for a Complex World.
delivery that can be useful at various stages of a course’s development. Here are a few that we find interesting and helpful.

**On General Course Design and College Teaching**


**On Learning Objectives**


**On Assessments**


**On the Syllabus**


**On Group Work**


**On Case- and Problem-based Learning**


Problem-Based Learning at University of Delaware. (n.d.). Retrieved from http://www1.udel.edu/inst/


**On Writing Assignments**


**On Tests**


3 CREATING THE SYLLABUS

3.1 A Learning-Focused “Promising” Syllabus

When creating a syllabus for Liberal Studies course review, there are specific technical requirements that must be met for a smooth faculty review process and so the course can be correctly entered into the university’s course catalog. Expectations for syllabi submitted for Liberal Studies course review are outlined with detail in this section. The syllabus you submit in the Curriculum Request Application will be a policy-heavy document that provides in-depth information about your course. It will also focus heavily on the assessments you have designed and how they connect to the course’s intended Liberal Studies student learning objectives.

After your course is approved, you may want to edit the course syllabus to be learning-focused. Though much of what you submit for approval must be included, there is ample opportunity to take a learning-focused approach, using the syllabus to both set high standards for the students and convey a strong sense of trust in students’ abilities to meet them. Ken Bain (2004) describes this approach in *What the Best College Teachers Do* as a “promising syllabus.” A promising syllabus aims to accomplish three things.

1. It lays out the promises and opportunities the course offers to students. This is an invitation, not a command, and the students themselves have control over whether they accept the invitation.
2. It explains what students will do to realize these promises. It again gives students control over their own education and growth—these are framed not requirements *per se*, but rather as the things students would be invited to do so that they could succeed.
3. It explains how the learning progress will be tracked. This naturally includes grading policies and criteria, but it more than that—it is “the beginning of a dialogue in which both students and instructors explored how they would understand learning, so they could both make adjustments as they went and evaluate the nature of the learning by the end of the term.” (Bain, 2004, p. 74-75)

The tone of a syllabus can also influence student perceptions of both instructor and course. In the syllabus you provide to students, you might consider using friendly, approachable language rather than adopting an overly formal style. Subtle differences in how identical policies are expressed can have significant impacts on how students react to a syllabus and the instructor. For example, rather than writing, “Come prepared to actively participate in this course. This is the best way to engage in learning the material,” instead try, “I hope you actively participate in this course. I say this because I found it is the best way to engage you in learning the material.”

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25 Harnish and Bridges, “Effect of syllabus tone: students’ perceptions of instructor and course.”
3.2 Basic Elements

3.2.1 University-Required Elements
University policy requires that a course syllabus be distributed at the beginning of the semester including at a minimum the following information:

- Course number, title, and credit hours
- Course description
- Instructor contact information\(^{26}\)
- Student learning objectives
- An evaluation (grading) statement that indicates what procedures will be used to evaluate students and the weight of each grade component
- Required syllabus statements (the Americans with Disabilities Act statement, the University Attendance Policy, and the Academic Honor Policy statement)\(^{27}\)

It is also recommended that instructors include statement outlining class policy and/or expectations regarding classroom conduct and missed work.

For more information, please consult the University and Faculty Senate Teaching Policies document available at Faculty Senate’s Curriculum Resources page.\(^{28}\)

3.2.2 Additional Details for Liberal Studies Review and Approval
Because the course syllabus will provide the reviewers on the Liberal Studies Course Review Panel the information needed to certify a course as fulfilling Liberal Studies requirements for a particular designation, syllabi submitted for Liberal Studies review must contain a greater level of detail than the minimum information required by University policy. If the particular designation carries particular course design requirements (for example, writing or diversity courses), the assignments and activities that fulfill these requirements must be described in sufficient detail so that outside readers can see that and how these requirements are fulfilled. If a particular assignment is identified as an assessment of one of the Liberal Studies learning objectives, provide enough information about that assignment for reviewers to tell that it will be an appropriate and valid assessment of that objective. It is helpful to identify any required texts and include a full reading list as well, with the understanding that this will be a sample reading list subject to change semester to semester.

Much of this detail can be included in an appendix following the syllabus body proper. This “assessment appendix” is provided for the benefit of the LS faculty reviewers and can also serve as a reference for future instructors of the course. See section 6.2.2 “Liberal Studies Assessment Appendix” below for more information.

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26 For the generic curriculum file syllabus submitted as part of the course approval process, these are best left as blank fields that can be filled in by individual instructors on a semester-by-semester basis. Cf. section 6.2.1 “Curriculum File Syllabus” below.
27 See https://facsenate.fsu.edu/Curriculum-Resources/syllabus-language.
28 See https://facsenate.fsu.edu/curriculum-resources.
3.3 Texts of Required Statements

In addition to the appropriate Liberal Studies area-specific language provided in section 4 “General Education Competencies and Requirements” below, University policy requires all syllabi to include the following statements.

3.3.1 University Attendance Policy

Excused absences include documented illness, deaths in the family and other documented crises, call to active military duty or jury duty, religious holy days, and official University activities. These absences will be accommodated in a way that does not arbitrarily penalize students who have a valid excuse. Consideration will also be given to students whose dependent children experience serious illness.

3.3.2 Academic Honor Policy

The Florida State University Academic Honor Policy outlines the University’s expectations for the integrity of students’ academic work, the procedures for resolving alleged violations of those expectations, and the rights and responsibilities of students and faculty members throughout the process. Students are responsible for reading the Academic Honor Policy and for living up to their pledge to “… be honest and truthful and … [to] strive for personal and institutional integrity at Florida State University.” (Florida State University Academic Honor Policy, found at http://fda.fsu.edu/Academics/Academic-Honor-Policy.)

3.3.3 Americans with Disabilities Act

Students with disabilities needing academic accommodation should:

1) register with and provide documentation to the Student Disability Resource Center; and
2) bring a letter to the instructor indicating the need for accommodation and what type.

Please note that instructors are not allowed to provide classroom accommodation to a student until appropriate verification from the Student Disability Resource Center has been provided.

This syllabus and other class materials are available in alternative format upon request.

For more information about services available to FSU students with disabilities, contact the:

Student Disability Resource Center
874 Traditions Way
108 Student Services Building
Florida State University
Tallahassee, FL 32306-4167
(850) 644-9566 (voice)
(850) 644-8504 (TDD)
sdrc@admin.fsu.edu
http://www.disabilitycenter.fsu.edu/
3.4 Texts of Recommended Language

3.4.1 Free Tutoring from FSU
On-campus tutoring and writing assistance is available for many courses at Florida State University. For more information, visit the Academic Center for Excellence (ACE) Tutoring Services' comprehensive list of on-campus tutoring options – see http://ace.fsu.edu/tutoring or contact tutor@fsu.edu. High-quality tutoring is available by appointment and on a walk-in basis. These services are offered by tutors trained to encourage the highest level of individual academic success while upholding personal academic integrity.

3.4.2 Syllabus Change Policy
Except for changes that substantially affect implementation of the evaluation (grading) statement, this syllabus is a guide for the course and is subject to change with advance notice.

3.4.3 A Note on Sexual Misconduct
Florida State University does not discriminate on the basis of sex/gender in education programs and activities, and, as a recipient of Federal financial assistance for education activities, is required by Title IX to ensure that all of its education programs and activities do not discriminate in such a manner. As a University employee, it is my responsibility to ensure that anyone who has been impacted by alleged sex discrimination or sexual misconduct—including sexual violence, sexual harassment, relationship violence, stalking, or sexual exploitation—is connected to appropriate University staff to provide information and resources following an incident. This is accomplished by submitting a report to the Title IX Director within two days of receiving a disclosure. Students are also encouraged to report incidents to the Title IX Director via report.fsu.edu or to FSUPD at (850) 644-1234.
4 GENERAL EDUCATION COMPETENCIES AND REQUIREMENTS

4.1 Introduction
This section provides a longer overview of the seven different Liberal Studies areas considered part of the General Education program and E-Series courses. Each provides information about goals for these types of courses, the competencies students should demonstrate through successful completion of the course, the student learning objectives to consider during course and assignment design, required syllabus language you must include, and other tips that will help you with in course design for the specific area.

4.2 E-Series Courses

4.2.1 Goals and Competency
E-Series courses should be designed to help students become competent analytical and flexible thinkers and lifelong learners. In these courses, students will focus on significant questions relevant to humanity and our natural world that can be engaged, explored, and examined using multiple perspectives from within a field or across disciplinary areas. E-Series courses are inquiry-based, meaning that they start by posing questions or problems rather than presenting a body of established facts. Through engaging in an active learning process of investigating questions, students will gain essential skills in critical and creative thinking, thereby acquiring the foundational skills, analytical tools, and habits of mind required for success in their majors, in the labor market, and as citizens in a global world. By encouraging students to analyze persistent issues of personal relevance using different approaches and intellectual tools, E-Series courses should stimulate curiosity and motivate students to pursue a lifetime of learning.

FSU graduates should be clear and effective writers, able to draw upon a variety of materials, forms, and conventions according to the demands of the specific writing situation. In E-Series courses, students sharpen their college-level writing skills to help lay the foundation for further academic work and professional lives. E-Series courses count towards the 12 credit hours of college-level writing coursework required by the State of Florida.

Although E-Series courses should be fundamentally interdisciplinary in nature, this does not mean that they should not be situated within a particular field. Thus, E-Series courses must also be certified for one of the Liberal Studies General Education areas or for Scholarship in Practice at the 2000 or 3000 levels. They must also include the learning objectives and meet the curricular design requirements of the other certifications for which they are approved.

All faculty (including adjuncts and post-docs) can develop or teach E-Series courses. Courses developed by one instructor can be taught by another instructor. Graduate students cannot teach E-Series courses.
4.2.2 Learning Objectives
By the end of the course, students will demonstrate the ability to:

1. Analyze the major questions or problems in the course using various intellectual perspectives.
2. Demonstrate the relevance of ideas or findings from the course.
3. Communicate arguments central to the course using clear, coherent prose that utilizes the conventions of standard American English.
4. Discuss relevant ideas from the course using sources from a variety of text types.

As E-Series must also be approved for one of the other General Education designations or Scholarship in Practice, the course must include and assess the appropriate learning objectives that the other designation(s) as well.

4.2.3 Instructional Design Requirements
To fulfill the writing requirement, E-Series courses must provide students with the following:

1. Two or more substantial writing assignments or the equivalent.
3. Feedback on student writing. (Feedback may be from various reviewers, but must include instructor response.)
4. Opportunities for revision.

“Substantial” in requirement 1 should be interpreted as “intellectually substantial as appropriate for the level of the course.” While the LSCPC deliberately opted to not define an arbitrary word count to be associated with “substantial”, the previous UPC expectation of “[together] totaling approximately 3000 words” (double that for English Composition courses) may be used as a point of reference. Examples of student work that will generally qualify as “substantial” writing assignments may include (but are not limited to): essays, project plans, case studies, process papers, lab reports, research papers, reviews, feasibility studies, in-depth discussion question responses, reports, portfolios, journals, and in-depth literature reviews. Example of assignments that will not generally qualify as “substantial writing assignments” include: résumés, e-mails, annotations, freewriting, PowerPoint presentations, brainstorming, oral presentations, in-class essay exams, or annotated bibliographies. If an assignment is not one in which students will compose as a process, including drafts, revision, and editing, or if it does not conform to the basic definition of “college-level writing” as it appears in the required syllabus language, it will not likely be judged as “substantial”.

The grading criteria and/or rubric should clearly set forth the expectations for the students while also outlining the standards and categories by and on which they will be evaluated. These should reflect the basic definition of “college-level writing.” Ideally, these should also be aligned with the course objectives, particularly with the two composition-oriented E-Series learning objectives (objectives 3 and 4).

Students must also receive feedback on their writing. This may be from various reviewers (e.g., instructors, teaching assistants, and/or peers in the course) but must include instructor response. Feedback does not have to be given on the complete assignment; depending on the nature of the class and the assignment, highly detailed
feedback on only one or two pages of a larger paper may be perfectly appropriate and pedagogically effective.

Further, writing is a process, and students must be given opportunities to revise their writing assignments in response to feedback. (This is not necessarily to say that they must be forced to take advantage of this opportunity, but both the opportunity and the incentive to take advantage of this should be provided in good faith.) In some cases, regular feedback on a series of smaller writing assignments that have basically identical parameters (e.g., a sequence of several lab reports), thus allowing students to correct mistakes in subsequent assignments, can function as providing students with opportunities for revision.

4.2.4 Required Syllabus Language
This course has been approved to meet FSU’s Liberal Studies E-Series requirements and is designed to help you become a competent analytical and flexible thinker and a lifelong learner.

In this course, you will compose as a process, including drafts, revision, and editing. The writing cultivated by this process conforms to FSU’s definition of “college-level writing”, which is writing that:

1. presents a clearly defined central idea or thesis;
2. provides adequate support for that idea;
3. is organized clearly and logically;
4. is presented in a format appropriate to the purpose, occasion, and audience; and
5. utilizes standard conventions appropriate for study in English.

As such, this course requires the completion of two or more substantial writing assignments or the equivalent. Instructors will provide criteria for evaluating your performance on writing, feedback on your writing (including instructor response), and opportunities for revision.

To demonstrate college-level writing competency as required by the State of Florida, the student must earn a “C–” or higher in the course, and earn at least a “C–” average on the required writing assignments. If the student does not earn a “C–” average or better on the required writing assignments, the student will not earn an overall grade of “C–” or better in the course, no matter how well the student performs in the remaining portion of the course.

By the end of this course, students will:

1. Analyze the major questions or problems in the course using various intellectual perspectives.
2. Demonstrate the relevance of ideas or findings from the course.
3. Communicate arguments central to the course using clear, coherent prose that utilizes the conventions of standard American English.
4. Discuss relevant ideas from the course using sources from a variety of text types.
4.2.5 For Curricular Requests

In order to illustrate how the course will have students engage with various intellectual perspectives, it is helpful to provide a complete reading list (or a possible sample reading list) to illustrate the types of texts students will encounter. An expanded course description on the file syllabus that goes beyond the three-sentence course catalogue description can also be valuable in framing the “significant question” and the interdisciplinary investigations students will make. A schedule or detailed list of topics is also helpful.

The syllabus submitted for review should also be accompanied by an appendix that illustrates how the course will meet the writing course instructional design requirements if these are not apparent in the syllabus proper. If the writing assignments are described only briefly in the syllabus, it is helpful to include full instructions for a sample writing assignment. If it is not clear in the syllabus where students will receive feedback on their writing or have opportunities for revision, explicitly state this in the appendix. In all cases, it will be necessary to include a grading rubric or set of criteria for assessing student performance on writing.
4.3 Quantitative and Logical Thinking Courses

4.3.1 Goals and Competency
Liberal Studies Quantitative and Logical Thinking courses should be designed to help students become critical analysts of quantitative and logical claims. To truly think with the quantitative and logical mindset that is the goal of a liberal education requires more than simply arriving at the correct answer where the procedure is clear. It also entails selecting and applying appropriate methods to approach open-ended problems, and expressing or representing these quantitative and logical relationships in more than a single symbolic system. Students can develop these underlying skills and ways of thinking through mathematics coursework, but also through courses focusing on statistics, formal logic, or computational thinking.

4.3.2 Learning Objectives
By the end of the course, students will demonstrate the ability to:

1. Select and apply appropriate methods (i.e., mathematical, statistical, logical, and/or computational models or principles) to solve real-world problems.
2. Use a variety of forms to represent problems and their solutions.

4.3.3 Instructional Design Requirements
The baseline level of rigor in Quantitative and Logical Thinking courses in terms of mathematical content must be at a college level.

4.3.4 Required Syllabus Language
This course has been approved to meet FSU’s Liberal Studies Quantitative and Logical Thinking requirements and is designed to help you become a critical analyst of quantitative and logical claims.

In order to fulfill the State of Florida’s College mathematics and computation requirement the student must earn a “C–” or better in the course.

By the end of this course, students will:

1. Select and apply appropriate methods (i.e., mathematical, statistical, logical, and/or computational models or principles) to solve real-world problems.
2. Use a variety of forms to represent problems and their solutions.

4.3.5 For Curricular Requests
Particularly for Quantitative and Logical Thinking courses taught by academic departments other than Mathematics or Statistics, the syllabus submitted for review should contain clear information on what mathematical, statistical, logical, and/or computational concepts will be covered in the class. A sample assignment or two (and associated grading criteria) should be included as an appendix that illustrates these concepts and how students will be assessed on their achievement of the learning objectives.
4.4 English Composition Courses

4.4.1 Goals and Competency
Writing is both personal and social, a process of making meaning as well as communicating, and students must learn how to write for a variety of purposes and audiences. English Composition courses teach writing as a recursive and frequently collaborative process of invention, drafting, and revising. Students must be able to analyze and synthesize ideas, situations, and texts, and thus English Composition courses help students become critical readers and clear, creative, and convincing communicators.

4.4.2 Learning Objectives
By the end of the course, students will demonstrate the ability to:

1. Compose for a specific purpose, occasion, and audience.
2. Compose as a process, including drafts, revision, and editing.
3. Incorporate sources from a variety of text types.
4. Convey ideas clearly, coherently, and effectively, utilizing the conventions of standard American English where relevant.

4.4.3 Instructional Design Requirements
The minimal instructional design requirements for English Composition courses as outlined by the Liberal Studies Committee are identical to those for Introduction.

This section provides as longer overview of the Liberal Studies University-Wide Graduation Requirements. These must be completed prior to students’ graduation. Many General Education courses also carry University-Wide Graduation Requirement designations. Feel free to think outside the box about what your course could offer beyond the General Education areas. In fact, many courses only hold designations from this list and can easily be geared toward upper-division undergraduate students or added to a “major” course.

“W” (State-Mandated Writing) Courses (see section 5.1 below). However, FSU’s College Composition Program sets forth specific expectations for both ENC 1101 and ENC 2135 that expand upon those set by the Liberal Studies program. Full details can be found in the College Composition Program’s The Teacher’s Guide.

4.4.4 Required Syllabus Language
This course has been approved to meet FSU’s Liberal Studies English Composition requirements and is designed to help you become a critical reader and a clear, creative, and convincing communicator.

To demonstrate college-level writing competency as required by the State of Florida, the student must earn a “C−” or higher in the course, and earn at least a “C−” average on the required writing assignments. If the student does not earn a “C−” average or better on the required writing assignments, the student will not earn an overall grade of “C−” or better in the course, no matter how well the student performs in the remaining portion of the course.

By the end of this course, students will:
1. Compose for a specific purpose, occasion, and audience.
2. Compose as a process, including drafts, revision, and editing.
3. Incorporate sources from a variety of text types.
4. Convey ideas clearly, coherently, and effectively, utilizing the conventions of standard American English where relevant.
4.5 Social Sciences Courses

4.5.1 Goals and Competency
Liberal Studies Social Sciences courses should be designed to help students become critical analysts of theories and evidence about social forces and social experience. The Social Sciences deal with human behavior in its social aspects, systematically describing and analyzing social, political, and economic reality, and attempting to explain and predict outcomes of social actions. Liberal Studies Social Sciences courses should be both humanistic and scientific—they should provide students with the fundamental skills to critically examine and discuss their place in society and to analyze claims about the networks of relationships between people.

4.5.2 Learning Objectives
By the end of the course, students will demonstrate the ability to:

1. Discuss the role of social factors in contemporary problems or personal experiences.
2. Analyze claims about social phenomena.

4.5.3 Required Syllabus Language
This course has been approved to meet FSU’s Liberal Studies Social Sciences requirements and is designed to help you become a critical analyst of theories and evidence about social forces and social experience.

By the end of this course, students will:

1. Discuss the role of social factors in contemporary problems or personal experiences.
2. Analyze claims about social phenomena.
4.6 History Courses

4.6.1 Goals and Competency
Liberal Studies History courses should be designed to help students become critical analysts of theories and evidence about historical events and forces. Students should emerge with a degree of comfort with historical theories and methodologies and the ability to apply these in their lives. To study the past is to help mold the future by providing a basis for informed judgment. The study of history provides a context for personal, political, cultural, and social experiences in the present. Liberal Studies History courses cover a relatively broad time span and emphasize the foundational aspects of studying history and making historical claims.

4.6.2 Learning Objectives
By the end of the course, students will demonstrate the ability to:

1. Discuss the role of historical factors in contemporary problems or personal experiences.
2. Analyze claims about historical phenomena.

4.6.3 Instructional Design Recommendations
The emphasis of History courses should be on teaching students how (history) arguments work. As such, History courses should ideally emphasize engagement with primary sources and provide space in the course to teach students how to break these down. Short writing assignments (with feedback) that allow students to engage in close readings of primary sources and careful critiques of secondary arguments are encouraged.

4.6.4 Required Syllabus Language
This course has been approved to meet FSU’s Liberal Studies History requirements and is designed to help you become a critical analyst of theories and evidence about historical events and forces.

By the end of this course, students will:

1. Discuss the role of historical factors in contemporary problems or personal experiences.
2. Analyze claims about historical phenomena.
4.7 Humanities and Cultural Practice Courses

4.7.1 Goals and Competency
Humanities and Cultural Practice courses should be designed to help students become thoughtful patrons of and participants in cultural practices. Students should learn to thoughtfully analyze subjective human experience from cultural, artistic, or philosophical perspectives, and they should leave enabled to engage with creative works as expressions of this human experience manifested within a cultural context.

4.7.2 Learning Objectives
By the end of this course, students will demonstrate the ability to:

1. Interpret intellectual or artistic works within a cultural context.
2. Use a cultural, artistic, or philosophical approach to analyze some aspect of human experience.

The difference between these two learning objectives is largely one of emphasis: whereas the first focuses on the work as situated within its cultural context, the second focuses on the student’s perspective or approach. Naturally, one cannot interpret a work without a perspective, and similarly, the analysis of some aspect of human experience in this context will likely be work-mediated; however, to capture the competency in its complexity, instructors should consider both objectives with some degree of independence. In assessments of students’ achievement of the first objective, they should demonstrate that they have an awareness of the cultural context surrounding some item or work. Assessments of the second objective should, in some manner, have students take on some intellectual approach and from that vantage point gaze at an aspect of our shared human experience.

4.7.3 Required Syllabus Language
This course has been approved to meet FSU’s Liberal Studies Humanities and Cultural Practice requirements and is designed to help you become a thoughtful patron of and participant in cultural practices.

By the end of this course, students will:

1. Interpret intellectual or artistic works within a cultural context.
2. Use a cultural, artistic, or philosophical approach to analyze some aspect of human experience.

4.7.4 For Curricular Requests
A sample reading list and description of assignments in which students will engage with the learning objectives should be included. The request should clearly identify how the two learning objectives will be assessed separately.
4.8 Ethics Courses

4.8.1 Goals and Competency
Liberal Studies Ethics courses should be designed to help students become *ethically engaged citizens and logical thinkers*. Thus, Liberal Studies Ethics courses should prepare students to examine views of morality while also considering the ways in which historical, social, and cultural contexts influence ethical perspectives.

4.8.2 Learning Objectives
By the end of the course, students will demonstrate the ability to:

1. Evaluate various ethical positions.
2. Describe the ways in which historical, social, or cultural contexts shape ethical perspectives.

4.8.3 Required Syllabus Language
This course has been approved to meet FSU’s Liberal Studies Ethics requirement and is designed to help you become an ethically engaged citizen and a logical thinker.

By the end of this course, students will:

1. Evaluate various ethical positions.
2. Describe the ways in which historical, social, or cultural contexts shape ethical perspectives.

4.8.4 For Curricular Requests
So that reviewers can certify that the course will include sufficient philosophical content for the Ethics designation, the syllabus should include readings and/or a schedule of topics to indicate where students will acquire the conceptual knowledge needed to achieve the two Ethics learning objectives.
4.9 Natural Sciences Courses

4.9.1 Goals and Competency
The Natural Sciences cover a wide area of human experience, with a common ground of hypothesis or model construction, the methodological evaluation of evidence, and the analysis of the observed natural world. Liberal Studies Natural Sciences courses emphasize foundational scientific principles and are designed to help students become effective interpreters of scientific results and critical analysts of claims about the natural world.

4.9.2 Learning Objectives
By the end of the course, students will demonstrate the ability to:

1. Pose questions or hypotheses based on scientific principles.
2. Use appropriate scientific methods and evidence to evaluate claims or theoretical arguments about the natural world.
3. Analyze and interpret research results using appropriate methods.

4.9.3 Required Syllabus Language
This course has been approved to meet FSU’s Liberal Studies Natural Sciences requirement and is designed to help you become an effective interpreter of scientific results and a critical analyst of claims about the natural world.

By the end of this course, students will:

1. Pose questions or hypotheses based on scientific principles.
2. Use appropriate scientific methods and evidence to evaluate claims or theoretical arguments about the natural world.
3. Analyze and interpret research results using appropriate methods.

For laboratory (L) or combined lecture/laboratory (C) courses:

As required by Florida State University, the student must earn a course grade of “C–” or higher in order to meet the Liberal Studies 1-credit laboratory requirement.
5 UNIVERSITY-WIDE GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS
COMPETENCIES AND REQUIREMENTS

5.1 Introduction
This section provides a longer overview of the Liberal Studies University-Wide Graduation Requirements. These must be completed prior to students’ graduation. Many General Education courses also carry University-Wide Graduation Requirement designations. Feel free to think outside the box about what your course could offer beyond the General Education areas. In fact, many courses only hold designations from this list and can easily be geared toward upper-division undergraduate students or added to a “major” course.

5.2 “W” (State-Mandated Writing) Courses

5.2.1 Goals and Competency
In their writing, FSU graduates should be clear, creative, and convincing communicators, able to effectively writing according to the forms, conventions, and demands of the specific writing situation. The State of Florida mandates that all undergraduates complete an additional six credit hours of coursework that emphasize college-level English language writing skills beyond ENC1101 and ENC2135. Florida State University addresses this need through the E-Series courses and the “W” (State-Mandated Writing) courses.

5.2.2 Learning Objectives
By the end of the course, students will demonstrate the ability to:

1. Compose for a specific purpose, occasion, and audience.
2. Convey ideas in clear, coherent prose that utilizes the conventions of a standard language.

Please note that by state law, the “standard language” referenced in the second learning objective must be English for “W” courses. Foreign language composition courses are welcome to seek certification for the Upper-Division Writing designation.

5.2.3 Instructional Design Requirements
The definition of “college-level writing” that should guide the design and evaluation of writing assignments, as well as the assessment of the writing competencies, is writing that:

1. presents a clearly defined central idea or thesis;
2. provides adequate support for that idea;
3. is organized clearly and logically;
4. is presented in a format appropriate to the purpose, occasion, and audience; and
5. utilizes standard conventions appropriate for study in English.
The writing process cultivated by the course, the descriptions of the writing assignments as they are presented in the syllabus, and the grading criteria for evaluating student writing assignments, should all reflect this essential understanding.

Writing courses must provide students with the following:

1. Two or more substantial writing assignments or the equivalent.
3. Feedback on student writing. (Feedback may be from various reviewers, but must include instructor response.)
4. Opportunities for revision.

“Substantial” in requirement 1 should be interpreted as “intellectually substantial as appropriate for the level of the course.” While the LSCPC deliberately opted to not define an arbitrary word count to be associated with “substantial”, the previous UPC expectation of “[together] totaling approximately 3000 words” (double that for English Composition courses) may be used as a point of reference. Examples of student work that will generally qualify as “substantial” writing assignments may include (but are not limited to): essays, project plans, case studies, process papers, lab reports, research papers, reviews, feasibility studies, in-depth discussion question responses, reports, portfolios, journals, and in-depth literature reviews. Example of assignments that will not generally qualify as “substantial writing assignments” include: résumés, e-mails, annotations, freewriting, PowerPoint presentations, brainstorming, oral presentations, in-class essay exams, or annotated bibliographies. If an assignment is not one in which students will compose as a process, including drafts, revision, and editing, or if it does not conform to the basic definition of “college-level writing” as it appears in the required syllabus language, it will not likely be judged as “substantial”.

Obviously, students must receive feedback on their writing. This may be from various reviewers (e.g., instructors, teaching assistants, and/or peers in the course) but must include instructor response. Timely and effective feedback should be feasible given target enrollments. Feedback does not have to be given on the complete assignment; depending on the nature of the class and the assignment, highly detailed feedback on only one or two pages of a larger paper may be perfectly appropriate and pedagogically effective.

Further, writing is a process, and students must be given opportunities to revise their writing assignments in response to feedback. (This is not necessarily to say that they must be forced to take advantage of this opportunity, but both the opportunity and the incentive to take advantage of this should be provided in good faith.) In some cases, regular feedback on a series of smaller writing assignments that have basically identical parameters (e.g., a sequence of several lab reports), thus allowing students to correct mistakes in subsequent assignments, can function as providing students with opportunities for revision.

5.2.4 Required Syllabus Language
This course has been approved to meet FSU’s Liberal Studies “W” (State-Mandated Writing) requirement and is designed to help you become a clear, creative, and convincing communicator.
By the end of this course, students will:

1. Compose for a specific purpose, occasion, and audience.
2. Convey ideas in clear, coherent prose that utilizes the conventions of a standard language.

In this course, you will compose as a process, including drafts, revision, and editing. The writing cultivated by this process conforms to FSU’s definition of “college-level writing”, which is writing that:

1. presents a clearly defined central idea or thesis;
2. provides adequate support for that idea;
3. is organized clearly and logically;
4. is presented in a format appropriate to the purpose, occasion, and audience; and
5. utilizes standard conventions appropriate for study in English.

As such, this course requires the completion of two or more substantial writing assignments or the equivalent. Instructors will provide criteria for evaluating your performance on writing, feedback on your writing (including instructor response), and opportunities for revision.

To demonstrate college-level writing competency as required by the State of Florida, the student must earn a “C–” or higher in the course, and earn at least a “C–” average on the required writing assignments. If the student does not earn a “C–” average or better on the required writing assignments, the student will not earn an overall grade of “C–” or better in the course, no matter how well the student performs in the remaining portion of the course.

5.2.5 For Curricular Requests

In order to independently assess students’ achievement both learning objectives on a single assignment, it can be helpful to distinguish between grading criteria that are primarily concerned with rhetorical context and appropriateness of argument (corresponding to learning objective 1) and grading criteria that are concerned primarily with aspects of prose style and mechanics (corresponding to learning objective 2).

The syllabus submitted for review should be accompanied by an appendix that illustrates how the course will meet the instructional design requirements if these are not apparent in the syllabus proper, especially when it comes to the mechanisms for providing feedback and opportunities for revision. If the writing assignments are described only briefly in the syllabus, it is helpful to include full instructions for a sample writing assignment. If it is not clear in the syllabus where students will receive feedback on their writing or have opportunities for revision, explicitly state this in the appendix. In all cases, it will be necessary to include a grading rubric or set of criteria for assessing student performance on writing.
5.3 Scholarship in Practice Courses

5.3.1 Goals and Competency
Liberal Studies Scholarship in Practice courses should be designed to help students become critical thinkers, creative users of knowledge, and independent thinkers. To accomplish this, they should engage students in the application of knowledge from a particular field of study and, more generally, in the use of critical and creative thinking to create a tangible product or outcome. Students will thus acquire direct experience of what it means to be, for example, an historian, biologist, or filmmaker by participating in a wide variety of experiences relevant to the discipline.

5.3.2 Learning Objectives
By the end of the course, students will demonstrate the ability to:

1. Apply relevant areas of scholarship to produce an original project.

5.3.3 Instructional Design Requirements
Students must produce a scholarly, creative, or professional work or artifact that results from applying key ideas, concepts, theories, and methods of the field. The course should also have students apply critical thinking and creative approaches in the pursuit of this tangible project or outcome. Generally, this will take the form of a significant capstone project for the course, but multiple smaller projects spread over the semester are also a possibility.

5.3.4 Required Syllabus Language
This course has been approved to meet FSU’s Liberal Studies Scholarship in Practice requirement and is designed to help you become a critical thinker, a creative user of knowledge, and an independent learner.

In order to fulfill FSU’s Scholarship in Practice requirement, the student must earn a “C–” or higher in the course.

By the end of this course, students will:

1. Apply relevant areas of scholarship to produce an original project.

5.3.5 For Curricular Requests
The syllabus should contain a description of the project(s) that students will complete in demonstration of their achievement of the learning objective, along with associated grading criteria. These can be provided in an appendix to the syllabus document if the syllabus itself does not describe the project and the grading criteria in detail.
5.4 Formative Experiences Courses

5.4.1 Goals
Formative Experiences are a type of high-impact practice (HIP) in which students engage in independent immersive experiential learning in settings outside that classroom that are relevant to their education, professional, and life goals. Unlike Scholarship in Practice courses, which require students to apply knowledge and skills within a traditional classroom-based course, Formative Experiences involve applying and strengthening knowledge and skills through hands-on experiences outside of the classroom.

5.4.2 Learning Objectives
There are no standardized learning objectives for Formative Experiences courses. Learning objectives should be tailored to the specific experience at hand.

5.4.3 Instructional Design Requirements
Formative Experiences will fall within one of five categories: creative/research; international experience; internship; leadership; and service. Examples of specific experiences that might qualify as a FE include:

- Honors in the Major theses
- Lab research
- Curating an art show
- Recital or exhibition of creative works
- Clinical or other practicum
- Fieldwork
- Student teaching
- Structured mentoring
- Global Scholars
- Entrepreneurship or innovation
- Specific program work in Living-Learning Communities (LLCs)
- Counseling children in an after-school or supplemental program

The course must require that the student complete an oral or written reflection on the experience that is the focus of the course such as:

- The relevance of the experience to past course work or disciplinary training or to life and career goals.
- Lessons learned (i.e., how the student might approach similar projects or settings differently in the future).
- A journal.
- A mock graduate school or job application or interview in which the student articulates the value of the experience.
- Any other reflection appropriate to the discipline and/or experience.

The student’s performance must be evaluated by qualified faculty or staff.
Formative Experience courses may be offered as zero-credit hour or more.

5.4.4 Required Syllabus Language
This course has been approved to meet FSU’s Liberal Studies Formative Experience requirement and is designed to help you use and develop knowledge by engaging in a hands-on experience outside of the classroom.

In order to fulfill this requirement, the student must earn a “C–” or higher or an “S” in the course if taken on an “S/U” basis.

5.4.5 For Curricular Requests
Given the individual nature of Formative Experiences courses, FE syllabi may be considerably more minimalist in nature when compared to other courses. However, a generic file syllabus is still required. Keeping in mind that expectations for engagement will vary across disciplines and experiences, the syllabus should provide qualitative evidence that students will engage in a substantive and meaningful Formative Experience by taking the course. Naturally, the syllabus must also convey the means through which student work will be assessed, including grading criteria.
5.5 Cross-Cultural Studies (X) Courses

5.5.1 Goals and Competency
Cross-Cultural Studies (X) courses should be designed to help students become culturally conscious participants in a global community. In Cross-Cultural Studies courses, students should focus on cultural diversity on a global scale by examining differences among cultures in general or by examining in detail one or more cultural traditions outside the dominant currents of European civilization.

5.5.2 Learning Objectives
By the end of the course, students will demonstrate the ability to:

1. Analyze some aspect of human experience within a culture, focusing on at least one source of diversity (e.g., age, disability, ethnicity, gender, language, race, religion, sexual orientation, social class, or other).
2. Explore one’s own cultural norms or values in relation to those of a different cultural group.

5.5.3 Instructional Design Requirements
The course contains some form of substantial assignment (e.g., a paper, a presentation, a multimedia project) which accounts for a significant portion of the final grade (at least 25%) and which requires the student to demonstrate having achieved the course competencies. Students must submit a draft, plan, or outline for feedback and revision before the final version is submitted for grading.

5.5.4 Required Syllabus Language
This course has been approved to meet FSU’s Liberal Studies Cross-Cultural Studies (X) requirement and is designed to help you become a culturally conscious participant in a global community.

In order to fulfill FSU’s Cross-Cultural Studies requirement, the student must earn a “C–” or higher in the course.

By the end of this course, students will:

1. Analyze some aspect of human experience within a culture, focusing on at least one source of diversity (e.g., age, disability, ethnicity, gender, language, race, religion, sexual orientation, social class, or other).
2. Explore one’s own cultural norms or values in relation to those of a different cultural group.

5.5.5 For Curricular Requests
Because students must demonstrate achievement of the Diversity learning objectives on the substantial assignment, include the student instructions for this assignment as an appendix to the syllabus document. This should also indicate where students will receive feedback on an initial draft, plan, or outline. Please also include the criteria or rubric that will be used for grading the assignments. These criteria or rubric should reflect the two Diversity learning objectives.
5.6 Diversity in Western Experience (Y) Courses

5.6.1 Goals and Competency
Diversity in Western Experience (Y) courses should be designed to help students become culturally literate members of society. Students should focus on diversity on a regional scale by examining the nature of relations among groups within a society, exploring topics such as race, class, gender, or ethnicity. They should learn to take a critical angle towards the human, to show its multiplicity, to explore the partial.

5.6.2 Learning Objectives
By the end of the course, students will demonstrate the ability to:

1. Analyze some aspect of human experience within a culture, focusing on at least one source of diversity (e.g., age, disability, ethnicity, gender, language, race, religion, sexual orientation, social class, or other).
2. Explore one’s own cultural norms or values in relation to those of a different cultural group.

5.6.3 Instructional Design Requirements
The course must contain some form of substantial assignment (e.g., a paper, a presentation, a multimedia project) which accounts for a significant portion of the final grade (at least 25%) and which requires the student to demonstrate having achieved the course competencies. Students must submit a draft, plan, or outline for feedback and revision before the final version is submitted for grading.

5.6.4 Required Syllabus Language
This course has been approved to meet FSU’s Liberal Studies Diversity in Western Experience (Y) requirement and is designed to help you become a culturally literate member of society.

In order to fulfill FSU’s Diversity in Western Experience requirement, the student must earn a “C–” or higher in the course.

By the end of this course, students will:

1. Analyze some aspect of human experience within a culture, focusing on at least one source of diversity (e.g., age, disability, ethnicity, gender, language, race, religion, sexual orientation, social class, or other).
2. Explore one’s own cultural norms or values in relation to those of a different cultural group.

5.6.5 For Curricular Requests
Because students must demonstrate achievement of the Diversity learning objectives on the substantial assignment, include the student instructions for this assignment as an appendix to the syllabus document. This should also indicate where students will receive feedback on an initial draft, plan, or outline. Please also include the criteria or rubric that will be used for grading the assignments. These criteria or rubric should reflect the two Diversity learning objectives.
5.7 Upper-Division Writing Courses

5.7.1 Goals and Competency
Liberal Studies Upper-Division Writing courses should be designed to help students become *flexible and proficient writers for professional purposes*. FSU graduates should be clear and effective writers, able to draw upon a variety of materials, forms, and conventions according to the demands of the specific task or their professional context. They must be able to build upon the foundational writing skills cultivated in their coursework by applying these writing skills in a particular field.

5.7.2 Learning Objectives
By the end of the course, students will demonstrate the ability to:

1. Use appropriate evidence from multiple sources to illustrate how a chosen topic is relevant to a particular field.
2. Convey ideas clearly, coherently, and effectively for a particular purpose, occasion, or audience representative as appropriate for the field.

5.7.3 Instructional Design Requirements
Upper-Division Writing courses must provide students with the following:

1. Two or more substantial writing assignments or the equivalent.
3. Feedback on student writing. (Feedback may be from various reviewers, but must include instructor response.)
4. Opportunities for revision.

“Substantial” in requirement 1 should be interpreted as “intellectually substantial as appropriate for the level of the course.” While the LSCPC deliberately opted to *not* define an arbitrary word count to be associated with “substantial”, the previous UPC expectation of “[together] totaling approximately 3000 words” (double that for English Composition courses) may be used as a point of reference. Examples of student work that will generally qualify as “substantial” writing assignments may include (but are not limited to): essays, project plans, case studies, process papers, lab reports, research papers, reviews, feasibility studies, in-depth discussion question responses, reports, portfolios, journals, and in-depth literature reviews. Example of assignments that will generally qualify as “substantial writing assignments” include: résumés, e-mails, annotations, freewriting, PowerPoint presentations, brainstorming, oral presentations, in-class essay exams, or annotated bibliographies. If an assignment is not one in which students will compose as a process, including drafts, revision, and editing, or if it does not conform to the basic definition of “college-level writing” as it appears in the required syllabus language, it will not likely be judged as “substantial”.

The grading criteria and/or rubric should clearly set forth the expectations for the students while also outlining the standards and categories by and on which they will be evaluated. These should reflect the basic definition of “college-level writing” as well as serving as an assessment of students’ achievement of the two UDW learning objectives.

Obviously, students must receive feedback on their writing. This may be from various reviewers (e.g., instructors, teaching assistants, and/or peers in the course) but must
include instructor response. Feedback does not have to be given on the complete assignment; depending on the nature of the class and the assignment, highly detailed feedback on only one or two pages of a larger paper may be perfectly appropriate and pedagogically effective.

Further, writing is a process, and students must be given opportunities to revise their writing assignments in response to feedback. (This is not necessarily to say that they must be forced to take advantage of this opportunity, but both the opportunity and the incentive to take advantage of this should be provided in good faith.) In some cases, regular feedback on a series of smaller writing assignments that have basically identical parameters (e.g., a sequence of several lab reports), thus allowing students to correct mistakes in subsequent assignments, can function as providing students with opportunities for revision.

So that all individual graduates will be prepared to enter professional situations fully equipped to contribute individually towards any collaborative writing efforts that may be typical of the particular field, Upper-Division Writing courses should be concerned with individual writing even if single-author works are not the norm within the discipline.

Courses that focus on writing in languages other than English are eligible for the Upper-Division Writing designation.

5.7.4 Required Syllabus Language
This course has been approved to meet FSU’s Liberal Studies Upper-Division Writing requirement and is designed to help you become a flexible and proficient writer for professional purposes.

By the end of this course, students will:

1. Use appropriate evidence from multiple sources to illustrate how a chosen topic is relevant to a particular field.
2. Convey ideas clearly, coherently, and effectively for a particular purpose, occasion, or audience representative as appropriate for the field.

In this course, you will compose as a process, including drafts, revision, and editing. The writing cultivated by this process conforms to FSU’s definition of "college-level writing", which is writing that:

1. presents a clearly defined central idea or thesis;
2. provides adequate support for that idea;
3. is organized clearly and logically;
4. is presented in a format appropriate to the purpose, occasion, and audience; and
5. utilizes the conventions of a standard language.

As such, this course requires the completion of two or more substantial writing assignments or the equivalent. Instructors will provide criteria for evaluating your performance on writing, feedback on your writing (including instructor response), and opportunities for revision.

In order to fulfill FSU’s Upper-Division Writing requirement, the student must earn a “C–” or higher in the course, and earn at least a “C–” average on the required writing
assignments. If the student does not earn a “C–” average or better on the required writing assignments, the student will not earn an overall grade of “C–” or better in the course, no matter how well the student performs in the remaining portion of the course.

5.7.5 For Curricular Requests
The syllabus submitted for review should be accompanied by an appendix that illustrates how the course will meet the instructional design requirements if these are not apparent in the syllabus proper. If the writing assignments are described only briefly in the syllabus, it is helpful to include full instructions for a sample writing assignment. If it is not clear in the syllabus where students will receive feedback on their writing or have opportunities for revision, explicitly state this in the appendix. In all cases, it will be necessary to include a grading rubric or set of criteria for assessing student performance on writing.
5.8 Oral Communication Competency Courses

5.8.1 Goals and Competency
Oral Communication Competency courses should be designed to help students become flexible and proficient oral communicators for professional purposes. Through these courses, students master the kinds of speaking that are appropriate to their academic or professional majors and future leadership roles. Competence in oral communication is indicated by demonstrating the ability to transmit clearly ideas and information orally in a way that is appropriate to the topic, purpose, and audience. It also involves demonstrating the ability to discuss ideas clearly with others and to respond to questions and critical responses appropriately. Oral communication courses in languages other than English can be approved for the OCC designation.

5.8.2 Learning Objectives
By the end of the course, students will demonstrate the ability to:

1. Deliver original oral messages for a specific purpose, occasion, and type of audience.
2. Make effective use of both verbal and non-verbal delivery in presentations.

5.8.3 Instructional Design Requirements
In OCC courses, students will develop effective oral communication skills through instruction and ample opportunities for guided practice in speaking. While the precise method of instruction and examination is the prerogative of the instructor, approved courses must contain the following elements:

1. The course must contain course readings and/or lectures related to instruction in the theory and practice of oral communication.
2. Instruction in the theory and practice of oral communication must be an intrinsic part of the course as evidenced in course objectives, course readings, activities, and evaluation.
3. Competence in oral communication must be demonstrated on multiple occasions spread out through the course of the term.
4. Instructors must provide critique and feedback so that students create oral messages as a process, including guided practice, critique, and revision. Peer feedback is also appropriate in addition to instructor feedback.
5. Grading criteria (e.g., rubrics or other) to assess student competence in oral communication are required. Assessment criteria for the oral communication course and the resulting impact on the course grade should be apparent to the students in the syllabus.

5.8.4 Required Syllabus Language
This course has been approved as meeting the requirements for Oral Communication Competency and thus is designed to help you become a flexible and proficient oral communicator for professional purposes.

By the end of this course, you will demonstrate the ability to:
1. Delivery original oral messages for a specific purpose, occasion, and type of audience.
2. Make effective use of both verbal and non-verbal delivery in presentations.

In order to fulfill FSU's Oral Communication Competency Requirement, you must earn a “C–” or better in the course.

5.8.5 For Curricular Requests

Courses approved to fulfill the Oral Communication Competency requirement must be one of two types:

1. A 0- (or more) credit hour course in which the oral communication component is a significant portion of the course work and final grade; or
2. A 0- (or more) credit hour course that has, as a prerequisite, a 0- (or more) or no- credit companion course that provides students with instruction in the theory and practice of oral communication. In the subsequent 1- (or more) credit course, students apply principles of oral communication and are evaluated by an approved instructor to determine whether they meet the requisite oral communication learning objectives. Examples might include undergraduate FIG Instructorships or undergraduate Teaching Assistantships (again, if tied to a course for credit).

In curricular requests for courses of the second type, the syllabus document should include a one-page appendix to the syllabus that describes how the prerequisite course will address the OCC criteria concerning instruction in the theory and practice of oral communication.

For all courses, the syllabus submitted for review should be accompanied by the grading criteria or rubrics that will be used to assess student competence in oral communication.
5.9 Computer Competency Courses

5.9.1 Goals and Competency
Competence in the use of computers is exhibited in different ways in different disciplines. Requisite skills for a graduate of the School of Music are not the same as a graduate of the College of Engineering. But underlying each degree program is the need to demonstrate mastery of computer use in that discipline. To satisfy the Florida State University’s Computer Competency Requirement, a course must require the student to demonstrate competent use of a discipline-useful software package.

5.9.2 Instructional Design Requirements
- The course must require the student to demonstrate competent use of a discipline-useful software package.
- The course must include a capstone activity or assignment which requires students to demonstrate competent use of computer skills appropriate to the discipline. This must include a grading rubric.

5.9.3 Required Syllabus Language
This course has been approved as meeting the requirements for Computer Competency.

For courses in which computer competency is infused throughout the course:
In order to fulfill FSU’s Computer Competency Requirement, the student must earn a “C–” or better in the course.

For courses in which computer competency is demonstrated during a particular component of the course:
In order to receive a “C–” or better in the course, the student must earn at least a “C–” on the computer competency component of the course. If the student does not earn a “C–” or better on the computer competency component of the course, the student will not earn an overall grade of “C–” or better in the course, no matter how well the student performs in the remaining portion of the course.
6 SUBMITTING YOUR COURSE FOR APPROVAL

For more information, please consult the Faculty Senate’s Curriculum Resources page maintained by the University Curriculum Committee: https://facsenate.fsu.edu/curriculum-resources. For full documentation on using the Curriculum Request Application, see https://support.canvas.fsu.edu/kb/section/179/.

6.1 Receive Departmental and/or College Approval
The place to begin the formal process is by receiving the approval of your department and/or college curriculum committee. This is usually the department chair, curriculum committee chair, and dean, but every department and college has slightly different procedures for this. Please be in contact with your own chairs, curriculum chairs, and staff as to what is the proper protocol for your situation.

6.2 Create a Generic File Syllabus with Liberal Studies Assessment Appendix

6.2.1 Curriculum File Syllabus
The file syllabus you will submit for review will be somewhat less detailed than one provided to students at the beginning of the semester. It should be able to serve as a generic template for multiple sections of the course taught by different instructors. In general, details that will appear in the student syllabus that should be left as blank fields in the curriculum file syllabus include such things as:

- Class section number
- Class meeting times and location
- Instructor name, contact information, office hours, etc.
- Graduate assistants’ names and contact information
- Specific details in the course description related to a particular offering
- Year- or semester-specific dates in the course schedule (a generic week by week schedule is usually preferable to a detailed day-by-day schedule for this document)

The course description as it appears on this syllabus should include the course catalogue description (see section 6.4.10 “Course Catalogue Description” below). Additional information may follow this brief description that further elaborates on the course content, philosophy, or activities as appropriate. However, it is best to avoid getting into details tied to a particular offering of the class except possibly as an example of a particular instantiation of the course.

6.2.2 Liberal Studies Assessment Appendix
One of the essential requirements for approval as a Liberal Studies course is that the course must assess student achievement of the required Liberal Studies learning objectives. These are cornerstones of effective pedagogy (see section 2.2.3 “Learning Objectives” and section 2.3 “Assessment and Feedback”). This is especially important for courses submitted for Liberal Studies General Education or E-Series areas, as they
are included in the annual assessment of student learning, and information about
student achievement on the Liberal Studies student learning objectives as measured
through course assignments will be requested as part of the university’s focus on
continual improvement of the general education program and student learning.

Therefore, it is recommended that you create a supplemental appendix that explicitly
clarifies (1) how student achievement of each LS learning objective will be assessed and
(2) how instructors will collect data on student achievement of these learning objectives.
This appendix will provide the Liberal Studies faculty reviewers with the information they
need to verify that the course meets requirements for inclusion in the curriculum, and it
can serve as a guide for future instructors of the course.

While there is no required template or model for this material, the simplest and clearest
strategy is, for each required LS learning objective:

1. State the learning objective as a header for clarity;
2. Provide a brief discussion (a few sentences or perhaps a paragraph or two as
   seems appropriate) of how the course will enable students to master that
   learning objective; and
3. Identify some graded in-course assessment(s) that can be used as a quantitative
   measurement of students’ achievement of the learning objective.

Each objective should have its own measurement. These measurement tools can be
nearly any graded element of the course that serves as an assessment of students’
achievement of that particular learning objective, for example, a quiz or exam, a lab
report, an assignment, a paper, an oral presentation, graded discussions, a final project,
and so on. Specific components of any of these can also be used to focus the
measurement, for example, specific questions on an exam, a particular component of a
larger assignment, or an individual criterion from an analytic rubric for a paper.

If they do not already appear in the syllabus body proper, please include with this
appendix whatever assignments or other assessments will be used for assessment
purposes as well as their associated grading rubrics. Additionally, because writing
courses are required to provide a rubric or set of grading criteria for assessing student
performance on writing, please include this as well.

Examples of possible assessment appendix formats and strategies can be found in the
example syllabi available on the Liberal Studies website.29 Please feel free to reach out
to the Liberal Studies office for assistance in identifying and/or embedding effective
assessments in the course.

6.3 Begin Your Request through the Curriculum Request
Application

6.3.1 If you are making a change to an existing course:
Log in to the Curriculum Request Application (CRA): http://campus.fsu.edu/curriculum.
On the right-hand side of the screen, enter the course number in the “Search for Existing

29 http://liberalstudies.fsu.edu/example-syllabi.html
6.3.2 If you are submitting a request for a new course:

Log in to the Curriculum Request Application (CRA): http://campus.fsu.edu/curriculum.

On the left-hand side of the screen, you will see the “Request New Curriculum” box.

1. Enter the prefix code the course will have when it is approved. This indicates the course’s discipline.
2. Select the appropriate course level (i.e., the 2000 level, the 3000 level, etc.). The full four-digit course number will be assigned by the Statewide Course Numbering System, so just indicate the first digit you feel is appropriate. (This can be changed by the system administrator later if the need arises.)
3. The Indicator suffix is used to indicate Laboratory courses (L) or combined Lecture/Laboratory courses (C). Most courses should leave this set to the default “None”.
4. Check “Yes” next to the question asking if this is a Liberal Studies course.
5. Click “Submit”.

6.4 Complete the Course Information Form

The main Submit a Curricular Request page breaks the process into three or four steps, depending on whether this is a request for a new course or a change to an existing course. For new courses, the steps are: Complete Course Information Form, Add Delivery Method(s) and Competency Certification Forms, and Acknowledge Departmental Notification and Submit. For changes to an existing course, there is an additional step of Provide Comments before the final step.
The first step is the course information form, which contains the essential information needed by the Statewide Course Numbering System and the Registrar to process the course in the University’s course catalogue. Much of this is self-explanatory, but some could use some comments.

6.4.1 Justification and Certification
Provide a brief summary of / justification for whatever curricular changes are being requested in the first field in this form. (This does not need to be extensive.) Also include the names and titles of the individuals who have approved the request (e.g., your department chair, curriculum chair, and so on, as appropriate for the request). If for some reason the course prefix code you would like for your course does not match the course prefix code of the request, please clearly indicate the correct course prefix here.

6.4.2 Request Effective Year/Term
Indicate the year and term in which the requested changes will take effect. This should generally be for a future term, but if can also be for the current term if the course as presented in the syllabus and CRA forms accurately reflects the course as it is being taught.

6.4.3 Credit Hours and Repeatability
Indicate the credit hours in the Minimum and Maximum Semester Hours fields. For most courses, this will be 3 credits.

As a general rule, general education courses should not be repeatable, but for some upper-division courses, such as workshop, seminar, or internship courses, it may be appropriate for students to enroll in the same course multiple times. For such courses, the “Max number of times repeatable” field should indicate the total number of times a student may take the course, and the “Max Credits” should indicate the maximum number of credits a student can accumulate. (For example, a 3-credit course that can be taken (“times repeatable”) 2 times would have max credits of 6.)

6.4.4 Grade Type
All Liberal Studies courses except Formative Experience courses must be graded. Formative Experience courses may be graded or SOU (satisfactory or unsatisfactory).
6.4.5 Primary Mode of Instruction

Most Liberal Studies courses should select “LEC – Class Lecture” as the primary mode of instruction, although “DSC – Discussion” or “LAB – Laboratory” may also be appropriate for some courses. Honors in the Major thesis courses should select “DIS – Directed Independent Study”. The Registrar’s definitions for these course components are as follows.

**Lecture**: Standard non-variable/fixed credit courses where content is delivered primarily through direct instruction *(over 50% of the class)* and consists of the use of straightforward, explicit teaching techniques (e.g., teacher-directed method of instruction) but may include some other pedagogies (discussion, class presentation). Lectures almost always have larger class sizes than seminars. If a course is more discussion or non-lecture dominated, then discussion may be a more applicable course component. Lectures do not preclude the use of active learning strategies.

**Discussion**: Interactive courses where both instructor and students lead and participate in the planned discussion. Lecture is not the dominant pedagogical activity of the course. Enrollment is generally limited to allow for greater focus on students’ critical reflection and exchange of ideas. Examples would include (but not be limited to) graduate seminar, honors seminar, capstone senior seminars, and topics in.

**Lab**: Courses in which students complete activities (e.g., experiments) for the purpose of the application of methods and procedures of the discipline.

6.4.6 CIP Code

Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP) codes are a national taxonomic scheme used for tracking and reporting purposes. The Interactive Degree Program Inventory website ([http://www.ir.fsu.edu/dpi.aspx](http://www.ir.fsu.edu/dpi.aspx)) provides a list of all academic programs offered by the University. Select the CIP code of the primary degree program to which that course belongs. For general education courses, this should correspond to the academic department in which the course will be taught.

6.4.7 Prerequisites, Co-Requisites, and Miscellaneous Requirements

It is important to list only pre- and co-requisite *courses* in the course pre- and co-requisite fields. If there are other restrictions (e.g., “for majors only” or “senior standing”), please list these under Miscellaneous Requirements. All this information should also be reflected on the syllabus.

6.4.8 Course Objectives

These are the course learning objectives as they appear on the syllabus. These must include the relevant Liberal Studies learning objectives. (For more on learning objectives, see section 2.2.3 “Learning Objectives”.)

6.4.9 Bulletin Sub-Heading

This is not used anymore and should be left blank.
6.4.10 Course Catalogue Description
Registrar guidelines for the course catalogue description hold that it should generally begin with “This course…” and be written in present tense. It should be two or three sentences in length and not exceed 400 characters.

6.4.11 Competency Certifications
Select all Liberal Studies designations the course will have, not just whatever designations are being added. For example, if you are adding an Upper-Division Writing designation to a course that is already approved as a Scholarship in Practice course, indicate both SIP and UDW, not just UDW.

6.5 Add or Modify Delivery Methods and Upload Syllabus
The Delivery Method forms contain technical information about how the course will be delivered (e.g., face to face, online). Courses must have at least one delivery method, and they can be approved for multiple delivery methods so long as there is a completed delivery method form for each delivery method. Additionally, the delivery method forms are where the syllabus document(s) will be attached to the request (see section 6.2).

For new courses, begin by clicking the “Add a Delivery Method” button. This is also how to add additional delivery methods. For changes to existing courses, click on the existing delivery method form to update the information and upload a new syllabus. Once all information has been provided, be sure to click the “Save” button at the bottom of the page. The information will not be recorded to the server otherwise.

6.5.1 Instructional Delivery Method and Mode of Instruction
Select the appropriate delivery method. Most Liberal Studies courses are taught via either the traditional (face-to-face) delivery method or the fully online delivery method. The “Traditional” delivery method does not preclude the use of flipped classroom pedagogies, clickers, assignments submitted through Canvas, out-of-class online discussion board activities, etc. Only select the “Technology Enhanced” delivery method if online instruction replaces face-to-face meeting time in the classroom.

If the form does not allow you to click on your desired delivery method, it is likely because you are attempting to duplicate an existing delivery method. Instead, click “Cancel” at the bottom of the page and edit the existing delivery method form.

Non-traditional delivery methods must also indicate what percentage of the delivery hours falls into the three categories of “Synchronous-Central”, “Synchronous”, and “Asynchronous”. These must sum to 100%. Most fully online courses are 100% asynchronous—students may participate from anywhere at any time. (Traditional delivery courses are 100% synchronous-central.)

6.5.2 Location
If there is the expectation that this course will be taught at locations other than the main campus (e.g., the Panama City or Republic of Panama campuses), indicate the locations. International Programs study centers are not included among these locations. If a course is intended to be taught at one of these International Programs study centers, simply indicate “No” for this question.
6.5.3 Technology Delivery Indicator
For traditional delivery methods, this question will automatically fill with 100% in the “no technology” category. (This does not mean that there will be no technology used in the classroom.) For all other delivery methods, this information will need to be provided. Fully online courses should generally indicate 100% web-based delivery.

6.5.4 Evaluation Criteria
Indicate the percentage that exams count towards the final grade. This should match the information provided on the syllabus attached for this particular question. For the purposes of this question, all tests and quizzes—including reading quizzes—count as exams.

6.5.5 Acknowledge Syllabus Language
The form will ask you to acknowledge that the syllabus includes the required syllabus statements (see section 3.3) and that the recommended language (see section 3.4) has been considered. You will need to re-acknowledge these each time you resubmit the form.

6.5.6 Attach Syllabus
Upload the syllabus document by clicking on the “Choose File” button at the bottom of the page under the Attach Syllabus heading. Select the appropriate PDF file to upload, and when you submit the form by clicking “Save” at the bottom of the page, the selected file will upload.

If there is already a syllabus for the course attached to this particular delivery method form, you can view this by clicking on the “Review Existing Syllabus” button. If you select a new file to upload, the new file will not upload and overwrite the old until you click “Save” at the bottom to submit the form.

6.6 Competency Certification Forms
Once a delivery method form is complete, one or more competency certification form will appear listed under the delivery method form. The “questions” on these forms consist mostly of acknowledging statements concerning various Liberal Studies policies for the competency designation in question. Only a few collect any information.

For Oral Communication Competency courses, the questions about the faculty teaching the course and the written certification of their “experience and/or training to evaluate oral communication competence” are no longer required.

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30 The University Curriculum Committee generally hold that changes in numbers of exams or the percentage that exams count towards the overall grade fall within instructors’ purview and do not require a curricular change or re-review. Specifying an exact number here will not unduly constrain other instructors’ pedagogical freedom. However, changing basic evaluation criteria strategy (e.g., from “no exams” to “exams and others”, or vice versa) is not permissible without a curricular change request.
6.7 Finalize and Submit

6.7.1 Request Reviewer Feedback (Optional)
Before submitting the request, you have the option of requesting reviewer feedback on your request. This can be used to create a digital paper trail of approvals within your department or college. This is not necessary, however.

To request reviewer feedback from someone, click on the “Reviewer Feedback” link, search for the person by name, then select the person, and click the “Send” button. The CRA will send an email to that person with a link to review your request and submit feedback, whether this is to identify items for revision or simply to note departmental approval. When feedback has been submitted, the CRA will send you (the requester) an email notifying you that feedback has been received. You can read reviewers’ comments by clicking on the “Reviewer Feedback” link.

6.7.2 Comments
For change requests to already approved courses and for all resubmissions, it is necessary to provide a few comments about the changes and/or revisions. Be sure to click the “Add” button to save your comment to the request.

Step 3: Provide Comments
Important!
Please provide a summary or list of the changes you are requesting for the course curriculum.

New Comments:

![Add button]

6.7.3 Acknowledge Departmental Notification and Submit
Once all forms are complete and a comment (as necessary) is provided, you will be able to complete the submission. (In the “Status” column, you should see a check mark next to each required form. The CRA will not allow you to submit the request until all required forms are complete.) Certify that you have followed the appropriate course proposal review process for your program and college and then click “Submit”.

6.8 Resubmitting Revisions
Most curricular requests will receive a request for revision at some point in the review and approval process. When a request is returned to you for revision, the system will send you (the requester) an email letting you know that revisions were requested and what these were. You may also receive an email from Liberal Studies directly with further detail and assistance.

If you need to resubmit a revised syllabus and/or forms for your request, scroll down to where the course is listed under the My Curricular Requests menu on the main CRA
page. If the course shows a status of “Pending Form Revision”, you can click on the course to make edits.\footnote{Do \textit{not} use the search box on that page to find your request. This will take you to a read-only view where you will be unable to make any changes and likely lead to much frustration.} You can read the revision comments from the system administrator by clicking on the “Revision Comments” link at the top of the page. Make whatever changes to the forms that were requested, upload a revised syllabus as necessary, add some comments to identify these changes (see section 6.7.2 above), and resubmit the request.

To upload a revised syllabus, click on existing the delivery method link (i.e., “Traditional”) for the delivery method syllabus you which to replace.\footnote{Do \textit{not} use the “Add a Delivery Method” button to upload a new syllabus unless you really want to add an additional delivery method to the course.} Scroll to the bottom of the page to select the new file to upload. When you click “Save” on the page, the new file will upload to the request and overwrite the previous one. (See also section 6.5.6.)
## Appendix A

Course Design Matrix: From Goals to Assessments to Learning Activities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Goals</th>
<th>Student Learning Objectives</th>
<th>Assessments</th>
<th>Teaching and Learning Activities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(broad and general)</td>
<td>(specific and assessable—what students will be able to do reflecting the course goal)</td>
<td>(how students demonstrate achievement of the learning objective—may be overlap in terms of objectives they serve)</td>
<td>(active and passive activities that reinforce foundational knowledge and ask students to “do” and “reflect”. Enhance learning and prep students for assessments.)</td>
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## Appendix B

### Course Design Matrix: Outlining the Course

Template for a 15 Week Course

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Major themes/content areas (units)</th>
<th>Topics addressed (weekly or by class period)</th>
<th>Student Learning Outcomes (map which SLOs will be addressed)</th>
<th>Related Assessment (the assessment these topics/activities will prepare students for)</th>
<th>Teaching and Learning Activities (active and passive; in- or out-of-class)</th>
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