General Education Curriculum
Criteria for New Requirements
May 12, 2020

Note: This document contains the criteria drafted by CEPP subcommittees during the 2017-2018 academic year. Requirements that remain unchanged when the new curriculum is implemented are not included herein. In the Major requirements criteria are not included, as they are being addressed by academic departments.

Table of Contents:

Bridge Experience: Power and Justice
(1 course, 200- or 300-level, enrollment cap of 18)

Course Structure

Bridge Experience courses have two components: Content/Theory/Reflection and Practice/Application. The Content/Theory/Reflection component should constitute at least one credit hour. The Practice/Application component must be at least one credit hour. These components can be integrated in a single course or be a separate standalone course combined with a 1-credit Bridge Experience add-on for the Practice/Application component. The 1-credit add-on may be an optional part of the course, in which case only those students completing the add-on may receive Bridge Experience credit. That said, students must complete both the Content/Theory/Reflection standalone course and the Practice/Application add-on in order to receive Bridge Experience credit.

Content/Theory/Reflection Component

Bridge Experience courses consider multiple definitions of or perspectives on power and justice to explore the ways in which unequal distributions of power affect individuals, groups, and communities. Through both overt and covert forms of discrimination, rights and privileges are not always allocated fairly. In scrutinizing the resulting inequalities, students in Bridge Experience courses examine different constructions of identity—of others and of self—and reflect upon their own positions, in their respective communities and on campus. Thus, a significant portion of the course should address contemporary inequality in the United States, the temporal and spatial context in which Skidmore students find themselves. For courses in which content focuses on historical or non-US content, the instructor should make it clear how this course addresses the contemporary US context.

Practice/Application Component

To create a truly integrated learning experience, Bridge Experience assignments require students to connect their study of identity, power, and justice to other areas of their education; e.g., their majors, previous coursework, or plans for the future. Projects and assignments in Bridge Experience courses require students to demonstrate an understanding of power and justice, moving from theory to application. Therefore, projects and assignments will engage an audience beyond the classroom. Examples of appropriate activities appear at the end of the criteria.

Faculty proposing Bridge Experience courses should clearly designate which elements constitute the Practice/Application component for the Curriculum Committee review process. If the applied portion of the course is a research activity that would require IRB review and approval, these course activities must receive IRB approval prior to Curriculum Committee review. Although Bridge Experiences courses are capped at 18 students, faculty may request a lower enrollment cap to facilitate the needs of a particular Practice/Application activity. If a course consists of a standalone course plus Practice/Application add-on, the enrollment cap of 18 is strongly encouraged to promote in-class discussion. However, the instructor may request to increase the cap on the Content/Theory/Reflection component (i.e., the standalone course) by presenting justification for doing so.

Bridge Experience courses can be modifications of existing courses or new courses.

Additional Criteria

- Bridge Experience courses, unlike FYE courses, are eligible to double-count.
- Because students should have diverse course preparation to meet the integrative intent of the Bridge Experience requirement, all Bridge Experience courses will be 200- or 300-level.
- Although some 200- and 300-level courses are open to first-years and seniors, students must take Bridge Experience courses no earlier than the first semester of their sophomore year and before the first semester of their senior year.
- Bridge Experience courses may have prerequisites.
- There is no limit to the number of Bridge Experience courses that a student may take.
- Students are expected to be on campus when fulfilling the Bridge Experience requirement (i.e., not studying abroad or using transfer credit).

Process for Approval

Prior to submitting your course proposal to the Curriculum Committee, all Bridge Experience Courses will be reviewed and approved by the Bridge Experience Director. Course proposals must include the following:

- Learning Goals for course, reflecting the Bridge Experience focus on power and justice

- A clear explanation of the course's focus on issues relevant to the contemporary United States. If the course focuses on historical or non-US content, the instructor should make it clear how this course addresses the contemporary US context
- A clear designation of the Practice/Application component of course, including structure, activity, assignments and projects, and enrollment cap
- Prerequisites and whether the course will double-count
- A weekly schedule with readings and assignments demonstrating the integration of the two components of Bridge Experience courses
- Assignments
- Grade percentages
- Course and College guidelines

Completed proposals should be entered in to Curriculog; you must "approve" your proposal in Curriculog to initiate the review process. The Bridge Experience Course proposal will be approved by your Chair, the Bridge Experience Director, and the Associate Dean before moving to the Curriculum Committee. At any stage you may be asked for revisions or clarifications.

<u>Sample Practice/Application Activities</u>

Events/Performances
- Symposium
- Mock trials or debates
- Poster session/Pecha Kucha (20 secs+20 slides)
- Moderated/facilitated conversation
- Talk back – Feedback and reflection
- Role playing
- Dance – with a reflective "talk-back" component
- Art gallery opening or similar to the Democracy exhibit in the Tang
- Student conference production
- An interactive event

Civic Engagement
- Making a proposal-pitch-solutions-recommendations
- World café model (splitting up groups to find solutions)
- Letter to the editor/Op-ed
- Consulting for stakeholders in town
- Ethnographic, observation, or action research
- Service learning both on and off campus
- Focused problem solving

Making/Creating
- Blogs
- Children's book
- Board game
- Podcast
- Short story or other fiction
- Fashion design
- Documentary
- Short Film
- Website
- Comic Strip
- Graphic Novel
- Song
- Photo Essay
- Maker space project
- Exhibit
- Sculpture

- Museum exhibition
- Citizen science project
- Focused problem solving (wicked problems, hackathon)
- Interactive Educational Program for Children/Teens

Senior Experience Coda
(1 course or a capstone experience)

Students in the Senior Coda will further integrate many aspects of a broad liberal arts education and will have the opportunity to imagine themselves—productively, creatively, passionately, and responsibly—as citizens in the world they are facing beyond graduation. The term coda comes from dance, music, and theater, where it describes the final section of a piece that serves to summarize the preceding passages but also introduces a final, novel idea. Coda captures the intended spirit of the Senior Experience, which should strive to enable students to integrate their previous experiences at Skidmore while at the same time fostering the production of new and creative ideas. The Coda is a moment for a student to simultaneously reflect on his/her/their academic past and look to the future.

Students in their senior year will complete one of many possible Codas. There is no specific course or capstone experience that students are required to take, but they must find or design an opportunity to take ownership of their own educational experience and pursue additional steps to integrate their many experiences at Skidmore. As with all courses and capstone experiences, faculty are free to design Codas as they see fit. The student's experience with the Coda should be informed by the following themes:

1. Relevance—Students will connect to the broader world, which may mean the broader world of academic discourse and/or the world outside of Skidmore College.
2. Integration—Students in the Coda will consciously and reflectively examine their broad and unique liberal arts education.
3. Creativity—Students in the Coda will produce original work and engage with individual ideas—in analysis, invention, or creation—in all fields.

It is expected that by their senior year, students have a firm idea of their academic interests and some idea of their post-college plans. In a Coda, students may work collaboratively with faculty and peers to identify an appropriate integrative course, research project, performance, and/or practicum. Students may choose to fulfill their Coda within their major, but they are free to find interdisciplinary experiences and codas offered by other departments. There are many ways to define such courses, including, but not limited to:

- Senior thesis projects or capstone courses/capstone experiences that require significant research and writing;

- Existing maturity-level courses that require substantial engagement with original research, in-depth analysis, service learning, and/or civic engagement with a focus on integrative learning;
- Practicum experiences within a major (e.g., an Education Studies major may satisfy this requirement with the teaching semester);
- A one-credit add-on to an existing 3 or 4 credit course that requires the student to focus on integrative learning, work in collaborative setting with peers and faculty, and present a final product that satisfies the three Coda themes; and
- A Coda course that is specifically designed by a faculty member to invite students who do not choose to take on individual research or practicum experiences to engage with the three themes of the Coda.

As part of the Coda, students will have the opportunity to reflect on how their project and liberal arts education connect to society. Working collaboratively with faculty and peers, identifying one's own particular areas of expertise, and finding moments to reflect on the integrative learning experience are essential elements of the senior experience. The Coda is the conclusion of the sequence of integrative experiences, and thus, seniors are expected to be able to engage intentionally and thoughtfully with the process of reflecting on their time at Skidmore.

The culminating courses/projects/essays/presentations/exhibits/performances should demonstrate: 1. that graduating seniors have engaged with their academic work in an integrative and creative manner, and 2. that they have drawn relevant connections to academic discourse, to society, and between various academic experiences throughout their time in college. CEPP envisions that senior Coda projects may be made available to the Skidmore community at the end of spring semester.

Curricular Guidelines

The Senior Coda concludes the series of integrative experiences that include the First Year Experience and the Bridge Experience. Once senior status has been achieved and the Bridge Experience has been fulfilled, each student must successfully complete one course or capstone experience designated as satisfying the Senior Coda requirement.

In the Senior Coda students will:

1. Integrate aspects of a broad liberal arts education by producing original work. Such work may involve analysis, synthesis, invention, creation, or any form relevant to a particular field.

2. Consciously and reflectively examine their liberal arts education. Students are expected to engage intentionally and thoughtfully with the process of reflecting on their college experiences.

3. Connect to the broader world of academic discourse and/or the world outside of academia. Students should have the opportunity to imagine themselves—productively, creatively, passionately, and responsibly—as citizens in the world they are facing beyond graduation.

Students may choose to fulfill their Senior Coda within their major, but they are free to find interdisciplinary experiences and codas offered by other departments and programs. Senior Coda courses and capstone experiences may take a variety of forms, including, but not limited to:

Senior Thesis projects or capstone courses, experiences, or performances;

Courses that require substantial engagement with original research or creative works, in-depth analysis, service learning, and/or civic engagement with a focus on integrative learning;

Practicum experiences within a major (e.g., an Education Studies major may satisfy this requirement with the teaching semester);

An add-on to an existing course that requires the student to focus on integrative learning, work in collaborative settings with peers and/or faculty, and present a final project that satisfies the three criteria of the Coda as described above;

A course or experience that is specifically designed by a faculty member to invite students who do not choose to take on individual research or practicum experiences to engage with the three criteria of the Coda as described above.

Applied Quantitative Reasoning
(1 course)

To be completed by the end of the **junior** year - prerequisite: placement or Fundamental Quantitative Reasoning (FQR) course

Students must complete one applied quantitative reasoning course. Although the specific context may vary, AQR courses include the study and use of quantitative methods as a primary organizing principle of the course. In an AQR course, students will develop and use quantitative skills in an applied setting to consider, model, and solve discipline-specific or interdisciplinary real-world problems and interpret and communicate their results. The course will have an FQR course as a prerequisite. Upon completing the AQR requirement successfully, students will be able to do each of the following:

- Use statistical and/or mathematical models to characterize empirical data;
- Understand, model, and predict the behavior of populations or systems;
- Interpret and communicate results orally and/or in writing; and
- Use quantitative reasoning for informed decision-making.

AQR Course Approval:
For a course to be designated AQR, the course will need to be certified by the Quantitative Reasoning (QR) Program Director in conjunction with a QR review team of two science, technology, engineering, or math (STEM) faculty, appointed annually by the QR director in consultation with the curriculum committee and the Dean of the Faculty. To certify a course as an approved AQR, the review team will consider the course syllabus as well as a brief outline of the specific ways in which the course addresses the learning goals outlined above. Learning goals related to QR are expected to be explicitly identified in the course syllabus. Once a course is certified as an AQR course, the QR review team will review the course every 3 years.

Pre-requisite for AQR:
To enroll in an AQR course, students will need to have mastered fundamental quantitative reasoning content. This mastery ensures that students have the necessary mathematical and quantitative reasoning skills to be successful in an AQR course and are prepared for other courses that use quantitative methods as part of the curriculum.

Fundamental skills ensure that students will:

- Be able to perform mathematical calculations involving estimation, basic formulas, units, percentages, fractions, statistics, probability, and geometry;
- Be able to formulate and apply basic algebra skills;
- Understand, interpret, and apply mathematical concepts and calculations in his/her daily life;
- Effectively communicate and discuss mathematical concepts and results both orally and in writing; and
- Appreciate the power and utility of mathematics and quantitative reasoning.

Students can demonstrate foundational skills through SAT/ACT mathematical test scores as before. New and transfer students not fulfilling this pre-requisite automatically through test scores will be required to complete an online QR placement test prior to registering for Skidmore courses. The test results will place students into one of the following three courses: AQR-level, foundational-level, or basic skills. In summary, students can fulfill the foundational QR content in one of the following ways:

- Achieving a score of at least 630 on the MSAT I examination or a score of at least 570 on any Mathematics SAT II examination or a score of at least 28 on the Mathematics ACT examination;
- Placing into AQR-level coursework through the QR placement test; or
- Successfully completing a Fundamental Quantitative Reasoning (FQR) course.

In addition, the possible outcomes of the placement test include:

- Placement into AQR-level courses;
- Placement into FQR-level courses; or
- Placement into a basic mathematical skills course (MA 100).

FQR Courses:
FQR courses are courses that ensure that students master the foundational skills outlined above. Students requiring an FQR course must complete this course **by the start of their Junior year and** prior to enrolling in an AQR course. FQR courses are offered in a variety of departments and programs and are worth two or more credit hours. While some courses may be developed to specifically address FQR content, other courses may cover FQR content through a supplemental 1-hour course meeting.

FQR Courses Approval:
For an existing course to be designated FQR, the course will need to be certified by the Quantitative Reasoning Program Director in conjunction with a QR review team of two

STEM faculty, appointed annually by the QR director in consultation with the curriculum committee and the Dean of the Faculty. New courses will need to first have curriculum committee approval prior to seeking FQR approval. To certify a course as FQR, the review team will consider the course syllabus as well as the FQR approval document which outlines the specific ways in which the course addresses the learning goals stated above. Once a course is certified as an FQR course, the course will be reviewed by the QR review team within 5 years of approval or at the discretion of the QR Director.

MA 100:
Quantitative Skills is a 3-hour course that currently exists and is the study of practical arithmetic and geometry, data gathering and analysis, introductory probability and statistics, size and bias in sampling, hypothesis testing, confidence intervals and their use in statistical analysis, linear relationships, interpolation and extrapolation, correlation, linear and exponential growth with practical applications.

Students requiring a basic skills course must complete this course prior to enrolling in an FQR-level course which must be completed prior to enrolling in an AQR course. Therefore, students needing MA 100 must complete this course or an equivalent course by the start of their sophomore year.

Global Cultural Perspectives
(1 course)

Courses that qualify for the global cultural perspectives requirement are those courses in which students develop intercultural understanding and global perspectives by turning their attention away from western, Eurocentric cultural traditions to study such topics as the global south, first nations/indigenous peoples, colonialism/formerly colonized nations, and mass migration, including comparative approaches to these topics. In these courses students may also examine the social, economic, political, historical, literary, philosophical, religious, and/or aesthetic aspects of different cultures and their global contexts.

Curricular Guidelines

The course should:

1. Prompt students to examine their cultural self-awareness, worldviews, and fundamental values.

2. Promote understanding of key aspects of cultures, attending to their complexity, variations, and change over time.

3. Address structures of power—such as colonialism and its legacies, regional hegemonies, and relations between dominant and non-dominant groups—and the responses that they provoke.

4. Introduce critical vocabulary, concepts, and perspectives central to the topic.

Language Study Requirement
(1 course)

The study of an additional language provides insight into cultural differences; it develops understanding of the workings of language systems, and provides an alternate means of perceiving the world. Accordingly, all students must take one course in an additional language. The requirement can be fulfilled by the successful completion of a course focused on acquisition and/or analysis of a language other than English.

Curricular Guidelines

World Languages & Literatures, Classics, and Asian Studies

Successful completion of a course focused on the acquisition and the analysis of the target language in the context of its culture(s) and literature(s).

Artistic Inquiry through Practice
(1 course)

Students in a course that satisfies the artistic inquiry requirement will develop an understanding of creative expression through hands on engagement in a performance, plastic, visual, digital, or literary art. That practice may include such aspects of the creative process as invention, interpretation, investigation, manipulation, and discovery, which leads to critical and creative problem solving. Through the critique and analysis of artworks, students will develop a context for and an understanding of their own creative engagement as well as the creations of others. Students will directly experience the thought processes and actions involved in the creation of artistic forms and should learn how to analyze, interpret, and criticize such forms. Students will achieve the advancement of technical proficiency and the refinement of critical aesthetic sensibility.

Curricular Guidelines
(1 course)

Artistic Inquiry through Practice Courses involve sustained engagement with a practice-based artistic process. Through this engagement, students will:

1. Develop technical facility through extended, hands-on practice.

2. Formulate and apply creative problem-solving approaches through active processes such as invention, interpretation, investigation, and manipulation.

3. Develop critical aesthetic judgment through analysis, synthesis, and interpretation in the larger context of an artistic discipline. Assess, respond to feedback, and revise their individual work.

Courses that satisfy this requirement will take students beyond mere exposure to an artistic discipline. Rather, they will be of a duration that affords immersive learning and iterative processes.

These courses must include both hands on engagement in artistic processes and the development of critical aesthetic judgment. While the proportional weight of these two elements may vary, each will form a substantive part of the course, with at least one credit of the course being devoted to actual artistic practice.

Humanistic Inquiry and Practice
(1 course)

Courses that satisfy the humanistic inquiry and practice requirement will examine contemporary or past cultural values, helping students to cultivate critical judgment as they study how people process and record the human experience. Students analyze and reflect upon human culture as expressed in historical tradition, literature and languages, art, film, performances, music, historical documents, cultural artifacts, and ideas and beliefs. Students will understand the unique value of the particulars within human contexts and the importance of subjectivity for human experience.

Curricular Guidelines
(1 course)

In a course meeting the Humanistic Inquiry and Practice requirement, students will:

1. Examine and reflect upon contemporary or past human culture as expressed in tradition, literatures and languages, art, film, performances, music, historical documents, cultural artifacts, ideas, beliefs.

2. Produce analytical work that demonstrates an ability to think critically, creatively, and independently about how people engage with, record and represent the human experience.

3. Work toward understanding how particular perspectives bear on perennial human questions.

Scientific Inquiry through Practice
(1 course)

In a Scientific Inquiry course, students will learn about the nature of science through scientific practices as applied to understanding a particular aspect of the world. Students will consider the process of scientific thinking as a set of inquiry-based methodologies and will become versed in the design of scientific studies. Students will also learn a body of knowledge associated with a particular discipline. At least one credit of the course will be devoted to hands-on student engagement in scientific practices during a laboratory or fieldwork component that includes students learning to make measurements and/or observations, evaluating the quality of data, and drawing appropriate conclusions based on available empirical evidence. The laboratory or fieldwork component will substantially and actively engage students in at least one of the following ways:

- Inquiry-based activities where students use inductive and/or deductive approaches to study an aspect of the world where the outcome of the study is not known beforehand;
- Discovery-based activities where students use inductive and/or deductive approaches to learn about known phenomena; and
- Problem-based activities where students develop their own inductive and/or deductive approaches to address a particular scientific question.

Curricular Guidelines
Upon completion of a *Scientific Inquiry through Practice* Course students will:

1) Have a basic understanding of a particular scientific discipline.
2) Understand the fundamental concepts of deductive and inductive research, as it applies to the sciences.
3) Know how to collect data within a particular discipline.
4) Be able to relate data to the larger context of a scientific discipline, assess the quality of the data, and provide rationale(s) for potential discrepancies.
5) Be able to organize, analyze, and interpret data, and report conclusions in visual, oral, and/or written forms that are effective and scientifically meaningful.
6) Be able to assess a study design and provide rationale(s) for strengths and weaknesses of the design.
7) Understand the source and meaning of scientific uncertainty and how it relates to our accumulation of knowledge.

Laboratory or Fieldwork Component

The laboratory or fieldwork component of the course will:

- Be at least one credit of the course (see Skidmore College Policy on Contact/Credit Hours 2. Activity Supervised as a Group).
- The majority of the time actively engage students in at least one of the following ways:
    - Inquiry-based (open-inquiry, research-based) instruction where the outcome of the study is not known beforehand, including to the instructor, and based on previous work students formulate the problem, develop their own procedure, perform the investigation, critique and analyze the results, and draw conclusions based on the empirical evidence.
    - Discovery-based (guided-inquiry) instruction where the instructor guides the students to learn about known phenomena. The outcome of the study is known ahead of time to the instructor but not to the students. Students are introduced to a topic in the laboratory or field where they use an established procedure to gather data which they analyze and use in the course with the instructor's guidance to develop an understanding of the underlying principle based on empirical evidence.
    - Problem-based instruction where students develop their own approach to address a particular question or problem. The outcome of the study is known ahead of time to the instructor but not to the students. Students develop their own procedure, perform the investigation, and critique and analyze the results to address the question or problem posed by the instructor and determine the conclusions of their investigation based on empirical evidence.