

IHUM LEGISLATION

SenD#4694

StCD#6913

PROPOSAL FROM THE COMMITTEE ON UNDERGRADUATE STUDIES AREA ONE REQUIREMENT: INTRODUCTION TO THE HUMANITIES

(Supersedes SenD#3307 of 3/31/88, amended 5/26/88.
Approved by the Senate of the Academic Council 5/15/97.)

Preamble

Stanford University is committed to a broad liberal arts education for all of its undergraduates. Area One of the General Education Requirements expresses a commitment to humanistic inquiry as a foundation for undergraduate education.

Since 1988, this requirement has been fulfilled by the course sequences in Cultures, Ideas, and Values. The years of experience with CIV have taught us a number of lessons that have been incorporated into the present legislation. These include the need to focus on fewer texts and study them more closely; the need to involve a broader range of faculty and departments in course instruction; the desirability of the better integration of works from outside the traditional Western canon; the importance of greater uniformity of intellectual standards and academic expectations; and the necessity for smaller discussion classes with more time in order to allow for the articulation and consideration of different points of view.

It is important that curricular programs constantly renew themselves. In that spirit, we make the following revisions. In doing so, we underscore our support for the opening to cultural breadth, diversity, and inclusiveness enacted in the 1988 reform of Area One. We charge the Area One Governance Board to ensure that the spirit and principle of inclusiveness established there is maintained.

The Area One Requirement: Introduction to the Humanities

A. Objectives

The Area One Requirement introduces first-year students to the subject matter and methods of the humanities. The humanities are broadly defined as the study of human thought, values, beliefs, creativity, and culture. This definition includes the study of social, political, and religious thought, as well as literature, the arts, philosophy, and history.

The Area One Requirement has the following interrelated objectives:

- 1) to address significant issues, themes, ideas, and values concerning human identity and existence;
- 2) to introduce students to the diverse traditions, methods, and debates of humanistic inquiry;
- 3) to focus instruction on intensive reading and study of a limited number of important, primary texts;
"texts" may include visual art, music, artifacts, and architecture.
- 4) to develop students' general understanding of what constitutes culture, what cultures share, how they

differ, and how they change over time; however, courses in Area One should not be expected to form a comprehensive survey of culture(s) or civilization;

- 5) to foster appreciation of the humanities and to help develop the skills, methods, and understanding necessary for serious intellectual endeavor;
- 6) to enhance students' intellectual values and skills in analysis, reasoning, argumentation, and oral and written expression, thus helping prepare students not only for more advanced work in the humanities, but also for work in other areas, such as the social sciences, sciences, and engineering.

B. Specifications: General

The Area One Requirement shall consist of a first-quarter course emphasizing general methods and forms of humanistic inquiry, especially the close reading of texts, followed by a two-quarter course sequence studying particular themes, issues, forms of experience, modes of expression, and/or bodies of knowledge.

All courses offered in fulfillment of the Area One Requirement must:

- 1) integrate lectures that elucidate assigned texts with small group discussion;
- 2) consist, normally, of two lectures each week, and two small group discussion classes (at least one-and-a-half hours each) each week;
- 3) affirm the spirit of inclusiveness by integrating work from outside the traditional Western canon;
- 4) in the small discussion groups, seek to foster rigorous inquiry, critical thinking, vigorous intellectual exchange, the free and open expression of various points of view, and the students' ability to speak effectively and cogently;
- 5) give serious attention to students' writing and ability to make effective written arguments;
- 6) in overall course design, promote linkage with formal instruction in writing wherever integration of Area One with the Freshman Writing Requirement is pedagogically appropriate and logistically feasible;
- 7) maintain the small size of discussion groups, which should average 15 students in each group, and subdivide courses, if necessary, to ensure that no lecture group exceeds 250 students in size.

C. Specifications: Area One, Quarter One

The first quarter Area One Requirement is designed to offer students an introduction to different ways of thinking and engagement that characterize the study of the humanities. This goal will be accomplished in the following ways:

- 1) Each student will choose one of several first-quarter Area One courses which will be taught collectively by two or three faculty members representing various humanistic disciplines dedicated to the study of literature and the arts, the study of the past, and the study of thought and belief.

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2) Such first-quarter courses are conceived of primarily as an introduction to humanistic methodologies. Second- and third-quarter course sequences may build thematically on first quarter courses or they may develop entirely new themes. First quarter courses should prepare students for whichever subsequent two-quarter course sequence they may choose.

3) Each faculty team will be responsible for choosing pedagogically appropriate, diverse, and resonant texts to be explored and interpreted, through close reading, in light of alternative intellectual approaches; students will be asked to consider the literary and aesthetic character of the text, its character as a historical, cultural phenomenon, and its claims to truth and credibility.

4) To allow for more intense discussion and study in depth, the number of texts chosen for the quarter will be strictly limited; depending on the length and complexity of the selected works, normally between three and five primary texts will be studied in their entirety.

D. Specifications: Area One, Quarters Two and Three

In the second and third quarters, students choose from several different Area One course sequences (in some cases conceived of as a thematic continuation of the first quarter, but open to students beginning the course sequence in the second quarter).

These course sequences may vary in their emphasis and approach to the study of the humanities. To meet the previously stated general criteria for Area One courses, the second-third quarter course sequences will be designed to address and explore significant issues, themes, ideas, imaginative constructs, and values concerning human existence. To fulfill this aim, the course sequences:

- 1) must be structured around rigorously defined themes and critical questions;
- 2) must draw materials from a broad historical span of at least several centuries, including ancient texts, and must, in the main, be organized chronologically;
- 3) may be organized in accord with the disciplinary interests of humanities departments or the shared interdisciplinary interests of individual faculty members and interdepartmental programs.

E. The Area One Requirement

1) Faculty

a) Academic Council faculty have primary responsibility for the Area One courses. Faculty teaching the courses should actively and directly supervise the leaders of the small discussion groups attached to the lectures in all three quarters.

i. Since attention to matters of pedagogy is vital for the success of the Area One courses, faculty will meet on a regular basis to discuss such issues as approaches to texts,

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continuity from one class session to the next, and pace and direction of lectures and small group discussions, course assignments and examinations.

ii. Area One faculty will be responsible for developing and overseeing pedagogical seminars for training postdoctoral discussion group leaders, both to prepare section leaders for teaching the relevant texts, and to discuss effective methods for conducting Area One discussion groups.

iii. Area One faculty will be responsible for considering the relationship of the two-quarter sequences to the preceding first-quarter courses.

b) Small group discussion leaders who are not members of the Academic Council are to be postdoctoral scholars appointed for a fixed three-year term with the possibility of a one-year extension. The selection process for these positions is managed by the Area One Governance Board in consultation with the Area One faculty; normally, searches will be conducted on a national level. These appointments are made by the Provost upon the recommendation of the Area One Governance Board.

2) Oversight and Administration

a) The Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education is the principal university officer with primary responsibility for oversight of the Area One Requirement. Administration of the Area One Requirement is the responsibility of the Area One Governance Board chaired by the Director of the Area One Requirement. The Director is appointed by the Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education for a three-year term, and reports to the Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education.

b) Area One Governance Board

i. Membership. The Area One Governance Board shall consist of at least six Academic Council faculty members, including the Director of the Area One Requirement, two postdoctoral scholars teaching in Area One courses, and two undergraduate students. Ex officio members shall include the Dean of H&S, the Dean of Engineering, the Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education, the Chair of C-US, and the Director of Writing and Critical Thinking, or their designees. Included in the membership of this board must be at least three faculty members who have current or recent experience in designing and teaching the first quarter Area One courses or the two-quarter Area One course sequences. It should also include three faculty members who do not normally teach in Area One.

ii. Appointment. Members should be appointed for a three-year term by the Provost on the recommendation of the Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education.

iii. Duties. The Area One Governance Board:

– ensures that the principles stated in the Preamble and the Objectives of the Area One Requirement are met in full;

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- _ oversees the implementation of the Specifications set forth in sections B, C, and D above;
- _ approves proposed course syllabi and text selection;
- _ designs and manages the process by which Area One courses are recommended for certification by C-US;
- _ fosters the process by which faculty teams are assembled to teach the first-quarter courses and the subsequent two-quarter course sequences to ensure diversity of academic interests and disciplinary balance;
- _ takes steps to encourage a gender and ethnic diversity within the teaching staff;
- _ designs and manages the process by which postdoctoral scholars are hired and appointed as discussion group leaders for Area One courses, and oversees their assignment to the one- and two-quarter courses;
- _ evaluates the effectiveness of the curriculum, pedagogical training, and teaching in Area One, with special attention to the possible involvement of the Center for Teaching and Learning and the possible use of peer-review teaching evaluation;
- _ sets policy for assignment of students to Area One courses;
- _ advises the Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education on the use of course development resources for supporting teams of faculty, departments, and programs;
- _ undertakes such other duties as the Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education and C-US may assign;
- _ reports annually to the Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education and to C-US;
- _ assesses the appropriateness and feasibility of integrating the Freshman Writing Requirement with the Area One Requirement, and oversees its implementation, in consultation with the Writing Advisory Board.

c) Area One Coordinating Committee

i. Membership. The Area One Governance Board will appoint as a subcommittee an Area One Coordinating Committee with representatives from all courses approved to satisfy the Area One Requirement. Membership of the Coordinating Committee should include both faculty and postdoctoral scholars teaching the Area One courses, as well as a representative from the Writing and Critical Thinking Program. The director of the Area One Governance Board will also serve as the chair of the Coordinating Committee.

ii. Duties. The Area One Coordinating Committee:

- * manages the operations of the courses meeting the Area One Requirement;
- * is responsible for topics relevant to the operation of all courses, e.g. grade policy, workload equity, student assignment issues, final exams, etc., paying special attention to the maintenance of consistent standards within and across courses;
- * raises issues and brings problems to the attention of the Area One Governance Board as required.

3) Students

Students are expected to satisfy the Area One Requirement during their freshman year.

4) **Staff**

Administrative support should be provided by the Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education at the level necessary to handle the regular duties described above.

5) **Evaluation**

a) Review of proposals for new Area One courses. Proposals for new Area One courses are first reviewed and approved by the Area One Governance Board, then recommended for certification to C-US.

b) Evaluation of individual Area One courses by C-US. Area One courses recommended for certification by the Area One Governance Board are subject to approval by C-US. Upon review and approval courses are normally certified for an initial three-year term. They may be renewed periodically by C-US for new terms of up to three years.

c) Annual assessment of Area One courses by the Area One Governance Board. The Area One Governance Board will conduct an annual review of the curriculum and teaching effectiveness of all Area One courses. Based on this evaluation, the Area One Governance Board will present an annual interim report on the Area One Requirement to C-US.

d) Formal review of the Area One Program. Starting in the 2002-2003 academic year and every four years thereafter, the Area One Governance Board will conduct a curricular and administrative self-study for the purpose of evaluating the success of the courses and the structures in meeting the objectives and specifications of the legislation. C-US will review the self-study and report on the Area One Program to the Faculty Senate. C-US may also make recommendations to the Faculty Senate for modifications of curriculum and governance provisions of the legislation.

e) Evaluation of the Area One Requirement. At least every ten years, in conjunction with the regular cycle of reviews of the General Education Requirements conducted by C-US, the entire Area One Legislation will be reviewed for the purpose of curricular renewal.

6) **Transition**

a) The Area One Governance Board will be appointed immediately upon approval of this legislation and will meet regularly to initiate and oversee:

- _ the development of new Area One course proposals;
- _ the potential modification of some current CIV tracks to conform to the new legislation;
- _ the hiring and pedagogical training of postdoctoral scholars to teach in Area One courses;
- _ the implementation of all other aspects of the new Area One Program, including the establishment of stronger links between Area One courses and the Freshman Writing Requirement.

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b) With the approval of the Area One Governance Board and C-US, a small number of one-quarter (Autumn) courses and two-quarter (Winter-Spring) course sequences may be offered to satisfy the Area One Requirement in the 1997-98 academic year.

c) All courses satisfying the Area One Requirement should conform to this legislation by the 1999-2000 academic year. (Because of its unique residential character, Structured Liberal Education [SLE] will continue as a three-quarter sequence, subject to its normal review by the Area One Governance Board scheduled in 1998-99.)