

Liberal Education Committee Policies Governing Approval of Courses for Inclusion in the Liberal Education Program

In reviewing course proposals from faculty, the Liberal Education Committee relies on Minnesota Transfer Curriculum policies and on Bemidji State University's stated desires to move toward a culture of assessment. It is our hope that faculty will find this information useful as they develop course proposals.

1. If you seek to include a course in a particular LE Goal Area, the course has to address 51% or more of the competencies of that goal area. If you seek to include the course in two goal areas, the course has to meet 51% or more of the student learning outcomes for both goal areas. As an example, Goal Area 7 has five student learning outcomes (A through E below). Compliance with MnTC requirements means that any course seeking inclusion in this goal area will need to meet 3 (or more) of the stated outcomes.
 - A. Students will be able to
 - Understand the development of group identities in the United States, history and culture.
 - Understand the changing meanings of group identities in the United States, history and culture
 - B. Students will be able to
 - Demonstrate an awareness of the individual dynamics of unequal power relations between groups in contemporary society.
 - Demonstrate an awareness of the institutional dynamics of unequal power relations between groups in contemporary society.
 - C. Students will be able to
 - Analyze their own attitudes regarding diversity, racism, and bigotry.
 - Analyze their own behaviors regarding diversity, racism, and bigotry.
 - Analyze their own concepts regarding diversity, racism, and bigotry.
 - Analyze their own beliefs regarding diversity, racism, and bigotry.
 - D. Students will be able to discuss the experience and contributions (political, social, economic, etc.) of the many groups that shape American society and culture, in particular those groups that have suffered discrimination and exclusion.
 - E. Students will be able to demonstrate communication skills necessary for living and working effectively in a society with great population diversity.
2. Goal Area 2 Critical Thinking is an anomaly in terms of how it gets treated relative to the other goal areas. Each course seeking inclusion in the Liberal Education Program must meet only one of the noted student learning outcomes for the critical thinking goal area, but can meet more if the faculty course proposer so chooses.
3. No one course can meet more than two goal areas (not counting Goal Area 2 critical thinking). In addition, a course can only be included in one of the core Goal Areas 1, 3, 4, 5, and 6. For example, locating a course in Goal Areas 3 and 10 is fine, but locating a course in goal areas 5 and 6 is not.
4. Assessment
 - a. All selected student learning outcomes must be assessed.
 - b. With the current (and likely continuing) emphasis on assessment, we ask faculty to identify the mechanism by which a student learning outcome will be assessed in the course (e.g., test, writing assignment, project, etc.) on the materials submitted to the Liberal Education Committee. Many faculty members do this on a draft syllabus.
5. Most course proposals seeking inclusion in the Liberal Education Program will be 1000-2000 level courses. Upper division courses can also be submitted for inclusion. Upper division courses will get a more positive read if there are no prerequisites for the course, and if it is clear that this is a course that is intended to reach a

variety of students (not just those in a major or minor), and if the course is designed to meet the liberal education student learning outcomes for a particular goal area.

6. According to the Guidelines for the Review and Design of a Minnesota Transfer Curriculum,

“[s]ome disciplines are excluded by decision of the collaborating institutions. Because not all courses that might address a competency are general education, courses will not be included from: business, health/physical education, computer science (an exception was made for programming for math, but for most programming courses a high level math is a prerequisite), field experience, career orientation, or, in general, any occupational courses or programs.”

In its examination of the BSU Liberal Education Program, MnSCU has broadly interpreted this exclusion to include courses with the following prefixes: ACCT, BUAD, TADT, HLTH, PHED, SOWK, and NURS. Any course proposal accepted by the BSU Liberal Education Committee from one of these prefixes will have to be asterisked in the BSU catalog—which means that students who take a liberal education course with one of these prefixes can count that course toward BSU’s Liberal Education Program, but not toward any other MnSCU institution’s general education program.