

**Materials linked from the October 11, 2012 Faculty Senate agenda.**

To: Faculty Senate Executive Committee  
From: Bill Bogley and Kerry Kincaon, Baccalaureate Core Committee Co-Chairs  
Date: July 6, 2012  
Re: Changing Criteria Language for Perspectives Categories

This past academic year, the Baccalaureate Core Committee engaged in discussion regarding an apparent discrepancy in policy and practice regarding lower and upper division classes in the Bacc Core. The official criteria for the following Skills and Perspectives categories include the statement, *“Be lower division and at least three credits”*<sup>i</sup>

Skills

Writing I  
Fitness

Perspectives

Physical Science  
Biological Science  
**Western Culture**  
**Cultural Diversity**  
**Literature and the Arts**  
**Social Processes and Institutions**

In the case of the four boldfaced categories above, 300-level courses were at some point approved to fulfill the category. The BCC negotiated this discrepancy on multiple occasions with course proposals we received this year -- Do we adhere to stated criteria, or do we acknowledge that the precedent has been set and admit new upper-division courses into these core categories? In every situation, the latter won out as the BCC felt that proposed courses would ultimately enhance the category. Recognizing that the Bacc Core is a progressive experience, it is not unreasonable for a sophomore or junior to be taking a class to meet a Perspectives category, and having the specificity offered by an upper-division course may be an attractive option.

The BCC ultimately concluded that we should revisit the lower-division criteria statement and consider changing it. After much discussion of the topic over multiple meetings, the BCC concluded the following:

1. It is appropriate to maintain the lower division statement as is on the two Skills categories.
2. The statement should be revised in the Perspectives categories to align the criteria with what has been the apparent practice of the BCC for several years.
3. The revised statement should acknowledge that Perspectives categories are often fulfilled by lower-division students and the courses therein should not be overly restrictive with limitations and/or prerequisites.

At our June 6, 2012 meeting, the BCC voted unanimously to strike the *“Be lower division and at least three credits”* statement from the criteria of all Perspectives categories and to add the following statement to the criteria for all Perspectives categories:

*Courses in the Perspectives categories shall be at least three credits and accessible to both lower and upper division students. Prerequisites or class-level restrictions for Perspectives courses must not create unreasonable barriers for students seeking to fulfill these categories.*

The BCC respectfully submits this statement for your consideration and hopes that this revision to Baccalaureate Core criteria can go before the senate in upcoming academic year.

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<sup>i</sup> The Category Criteria can be found in 2011-2012 Curriculum Handbook at <http://oregonstate.edu/admin/aa/apaa/sites/default/files/Academic-Programs/Curriculum/CC-Handbook-2010-11.pdf>