October 10, 2008

TO: Committee on Educational Policy
FROM: David Evan Jones, Acting Dean of Arts (on behalf of the Arts Council of Chairs)

SA BREADTH REQUIREMENT: The Arts Division proposes the following definition
of the "A" (ARTS) Subject Area Breadth requirement:

A (Arts) GE Requirement:
Rationale: Education in the arts provides a foundation for understanding, interpreting,
and ultimately changing the world in which we live. Our daily experience is saturated by
mediated sounds and images, yet few have the skills to analyze and interpret their cultural
and historical impact. Art, music, film, digital media, and performance are also the
central means by which global culture circulates in and through technology. Visual
literacy and global media-awareness are therefore central to twenty-first-century
citizenship and vital components of a liberal arts education.

Creative thinking is also essential to problem-solving in the future and artists and art-
making are central to the process. By means of their unconventional and often
destablizing perspectives, artists serve their societies by provoking awareness of
previously implicit or 'naturalized' media techniques and messages. This service is
rendered no less by musicians, painters, and actors than by film-makers and digital artists.

The arts inspire and develop the capacity for creative thought and action, individually and
collaboratively, locally and globally, within and beyond the university.

Requirements: Students must complete two courses that meet the criteria for the A
(Arts) general education designation.

Criteria: A course meeting the A (Arts) general education designation satisfies one or
both of the following criteria:

*1. It primarily involves instruction in the creative practice of one or more artistic
media (media in which non-textual materials play primary roles).*

*2. It primarily involves instruction in the analysis, interpretation and/or history of one or
more artistic media (media in which non-textual materials play primary roles).*

Examples of courses that are good candidates for this designation:
Almost all of the courses offering the "A" (ARTS) GE under the current system would
also meet the requirements for this designation under the criteria proposed above. Most
of the current "A" courses are introductory technical, analytic, interpretive, and historical
courses offered by Arts Division departments, but there are several from other divisions
that fall into this category and would continue to qualify. For example:

>Anthropology 81A. Mexican Folklorico Dance (2 credits). F
>Provides instruction in the aesthetic, cultural, and historical dimensions of Mexican folklorico
>dance. Students taught choreographed dances from various regions of Mexico and also learn dance
>techniques (técnica) and stage make-up application. Additional workshops and lectures offered to

supplement class. Open to all students; no previous experience required. (Also offered as Latin American and Latino Studies 81A. Students cannot receive credit for both courses.) May be repeated for credit. (General Education Code(s): A.) O. Najera Ramirez

Feminism 147. The Rise and Fall of the New Queer Cinema. *
Documents/interprets the phenomenon "New Queer Cinema." Seeks to understand its precedents, preconditions (social, political, medical) leading to its explosive growth, and forces (economic, aesthetic, medical) spelling the end of the artistic movement, though its influence seemed simultaneously to spill into every televisual medium. (General Education Code(s): A.) B. Rich

Community Studies 125. Documentary and Technology: Objectivity, Subjectivity, and Truth. *
Intended to provide a solid grounding in the documentary (largely film/video), its approaches over time, changes in thinking about the role that the machine has played in the nature of the medium, and an opportunity to think critically about practice, community, use, and reception. Enrollment limited to 25. (General Education Code(s): A.) B. Rich

Philosophy 152. Aesthetics. *
Problems about form, meaning, and interpretation in art, as found in major aesthetic theories from the philosophical tradition, and also in a variety of encounters between recent philosophy and the arts. One course in philosophy is strongly recommended prior to taking this course. (General Education Code(s): A.) R. Goff

Courses primarily involving instruction in the creation and interpretation of textual materials NOT in relation with other media would not qualify for the "A". Under the current GE system, Literature 10 and other courses in Creative Writing offer the "A" designation while courses offering instruction in literature from historical/interpretive/ analytic perspectives (e.g. Literature 1, Literature 61, etc) do not offer the "A". Under the proposed criteria, neither of these courses would qualify for the "A" designation:

10. Introduction to Creative Writing. F,W,S
Introduction to the crafts and techniques of poetry, fiction, and creative non-fiction, identifying and exploring traditional and non-traditional literary forms and genres while working on individual creative writing projects. Two lectures/author readings and two workshop sections per week. Enrollment restricted to first-year students, sophomores, and juniors. May be repeated for credit. (General Education Code(s): A.) (F) M. Perks, (WS) K. Yamashita

1. Literary Interpretation. F,W,S
Close reading and analysis of literary texts, including representative examples of several different genres and periods. An introduction to practical criticism required of all literature majors; should be completed prior to upper-division work in literature. Prerequisite(s): satisfaction of the Subject A and Composition requirements. (General Education Code(s): IH, W.) S. Gillman, J. Poblete, V. Cooppan

However, courses that primarily involve instruction in writing and interpreting texts for performative arts or which emphasize instruction on the relationship between text and image would qualify for the new "A" designation. For example:

Theater 157. Playwriting. F
Students are given the opportunity to write their own scripts and refine them as the result of class discussion and scenework with actors. Work is on specific problems involving such elements as the structuring of a plot or the development of character. Prerequisite(s): satisfaction of the Entry Level Writing and Composition requirements. May be repeated for credit. (General Education Code(s): W,A.) J. Bierman

Theater 80E. Stand-Up Comedy. F
American comedy from Mark Twain to present, including popular humor, history, and politics, using comedy from the '20s through the women's gay and civil rights movements. Discussions are based on readings and videos of a wide variety of artists. Students present performances weekly. (General Education Code(s): T4-Humanities and Arts, A.) The Staff

HAVC 153. History of the Book. W
History of book production and use in the West from antiquity to modern times. Development from roll to codex and from script to print. Emphasis on the relationship between text and image. Class conducted in Special Collections, McHenry. Exhibition as class project. Enrollment limited to 25. (General Education Code(s): A.) E. Remak-Honnef

Courses addressing issues in artistic media in some offerings but not in others would not qualify for the "A" designation:

Feminism123. Feminism and Cultural Production. F
Explores relationship between feminism and culture. Topics will vary and include different forms of cultural production such as film and literature. Regional/national focus will also vary. (Formerly course 80J.) Prerequisite(s): course 1, 1A, or 1B. Enrollment restricted to sophomores, juniors, and seniors. May be repeated for credit. (General Education Code(s): A, E.) The Staff

Courses addressing media in a variety of contexts which do not currently offer the "A" under the current system would qualify for the "A" under the new system. For example:

Feminism124. Technologies and Latinidad: Cyberspace and Beyond. *
Introduction to analyzing technology as it is produced through gender, race, class, and sexualized differences. Examines film and the Internet through the genealogy of these technologies in relation to U.S. nationalism, development, and empire, creating social communities and new identities, and the global production of labor. Examines interdisciplinary methods (ethnography, media analysis, cultural studies and, literary analysis) to broaden understanding of Latina/o subjectivity as historical construct mediated through various modes of visual production. Enrollment restricted to sophomore, junior, and senior feminist studies majors during priority enrollment only. Enrollment limited to 25. (General Education Code(s): E.) F. Schaeffer-Grabiel

Distinct educational objectives of Arts and Humanities designations:
As indicated above, courses with the "A" (Arts) designation will focus primarily on the creation, analysis, interpretation, and history of artistic media: media in which non-textual materials play primary roles. In concentrating on media defined in this way, the arts address a range of perceptual, social, and aesthetic issues not necessarily encountered in the other humanities.   These issues include, for example: visual, auditory, and performative encoding and interpretation, creation and analysis of multi-modal aesthetic experience, the aesthetics of temporal structures, and so on.

Requiring two "A" (Arts) courses of each student:
As the delivery of images, sounds, performances, and digitally-created environments has been increasingly facilitated by technological advance, artistic media have consumed ever-increasing proportions of the daily experience of peoples in post-industrial societies. Despite (or perhaps because of) the pervasiveness of these media, many individuals are so entrained by these forms that they are largely unconscious of and unable to analyze the techniques by means of which artistic media influence their attention, convey a political or social message, present an abstract conceptual structure, impart a narrative.

The Arts Division aims to provide students with the perceptual and conceptual tools with which to understand the means and materials by which works of visual art, theater, dance, music, film and digital arts are made. Such an understanding will, in turn, facilitate an ability to analyze, to interpret, and perhaps to create works of art in these media. A single "A" course would be insufficient to this project.

We recognize that every Division (including the Arts) can justly claim that two required GE courses in their subject area are insufficient to their pedagogical goals. We base our claim for two courses on the arts on the following points:

> • From popular entertainment to on-line academic journals to the arts, communications in our society increasingly utilize artistic media. There is a well-established and growing need for every educated individuals to be fluent in analyzing, interpreting, and in creating communications in these media.

> • Artists make the most diverse and extreme uses of these media. By means of their unconventional and often destablizing perspectives, they provoke awareness of previously implicit or 'naturalized' media techniques and messages. This awareness is essential to an informed citizenry of the 21st century.

> • Courses meeting the criteria for the "A" designation are by no means the exclusive province of the Arts Division. As suggested by the example courses offered above, departments in the Humanities Division can easily offer courses meeting the criteria for the "A".

> • None of the other Subject Area criteria are likely to require, as a condition for the SA designation, experience with artistic media.

Ways of Learning requirements and their educational objectives:

The Arts Division advocates the addition of two "ways of learning" that will find application across all divisions:

Creative processes

Courses should teach specific techniques by means of which individuals or collaborative groups...

a) ... combine theory-driven speculation with experimental investigation to produce new knowledge and/or to create new works of art.

b) ... design experiments and other methodologies to answer narrowly-focused questions or to frame large issues.

c) ... produce and assess innovations, improvisations, and other unforeseen outcomes.

<u>Rationale</u>: While many courses involve the use of some creative or experimental methodology, few teach approaches to framing questions for research, designing methodologies to address these questions, and assessing the results. If university education is to be more than the rote acquisition of skills and concepts, a broader vision of the process of generating knowledge and creating artworks is required.

Visual fluencies

These courses explore the complex ways in which information of all kinds (cultural meanings, numerical data, molecular structure, etc.) is represented in images.

Courses should teach specific techniques by means of which…

a.) …viewers make meaning of images in art and popular media.

b.) …relationships in complex data sets can be effectively clarified or obscured by visualizations and information design.

c.) …images are used to represent non-visual processes (time-variant data, music & dance notations, etc.).

<u>Rationale</u>: Technological developments over the past century have made images increasingly integral to communications in a variety of media. Fluency with images — the ways, for example, in which visualizations of data privilege one interpretation over another, or the ways in which photographs convey subtle social and political perspectives — is required for knowledgeable and informed citizenship in the 21st century. The Arts Division regards this "way of knowing" as equivalent in importance to the "W" requirement. Like the "W", the Visual Fluency "way of knowing" can be adapted to the particular communication needs of individual disciplines. Like the "W" it addresses a communication skill that should be expected of all educated individuals.

Commentary on some of the "ways of learning" offered by CEP:
> • *Critical thinking.*
> We believe the term "critical thinking" is much too general to define a "way of learning" (or fluency). When defined across multiple disciplines this category will not represent a sufficiently focused set of skills and approaches.
>
> • *Creative endeavor.*
> We have proposed an alternative to this "way of learning" above.
>
> • *Quantitative/formal reasoning*
> • *Statistical reasoning/data interpretation.*
> While acknowledging the differences between quantitative reasoning and "Statistical reasoning/data interpretation" we do not find these two "ways of knowing" as defined by CEP sufficiently distinct to occupy two places in a set limited to about six. They should be combined or *Statistical reasoning/data interpretation* should be discarded.

• *Cross-cultural understanding.*
• *Race, ethnicity, gender, sexuality.*
While acknowledging the differences between these two categories, we believe that in a set limited to about six, they should be subsumed into one that addresses *Race, culture, gender, and sexuality.*

• *Science, technology, and society.*
As with "critical thinking", we believe "Science, technology, and society is far too general a category (or conglomerate) to define a coherent "way of learning" across multiple disciplines.

• *Environmental understanding.*
We support the proposed "way of learning" in "environmental understanding".

"Ways of learning" or "Fluencies"?
The Arts Division proposes that "ways of learning" instead be identified as "fluencies". Most of the proposed *ways of learning* are networks of knowledge and conceptual skills in which students learn to navigate, understand, interpret, and express themselves.

III. Interdisciplinary Topical Clusters:
The criteria for determining what might constitute a coherent ITC and the challenges of coordinating content and schedules for these courses remain unclear to the Arts Division. While the Arts Division proposals regarding Subject Area (SA) requirement and *ways of knowing* have been discussed and reviewed by the Chairs, the following ideas for Interdisciplinary Topical Clusters (ITCs) are tentative suggestions raised by individuals rather than firm proposals from the Division.

Art 80F: Introduction to Issues in Digital Media
Computer Science: CMPS 80J: Technology Targeted at Social Issues

Art 80V: Issues and Artists
American Studies: AMST 80F: Introduction to U.S. Popular Culture
Economics: ECON 80J: Value and Support of the Arts: Challenges and Opportunities in American Society

Art 80C: Introduction to Visual Arts
History of Consciousness: HISC 80T: Art and Life: Introduction to Interventionist Art and Visual Studies
Anthropology: ANTH 80J: Introduction to Visual Culture

Music 80F: Music in Latin American Culture   ("A" GE)
Latin American and Latino Studies 80T. Topics in LALS Cinema. ("E" GE)

Music 80L. Artificial Intelligence and Music. (GE Code "A")
Computer Science 80B. Systems and Simulation. (GE Codes "Q" etc.)

80V. VRML 3-D Worlds on the Web. (GE Code "T-2 Nat Sci)
80R. Music and the World Wide Web. (GE Code "A")

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