

IDEA II: Distribution Requirements with Ways of Knowing

The second idea moves to distribution requirements, but defines these distribution requirements in such a way as to promote making inter-disciplinary connections, and touching base with a set of key skills in literacy, numeracy, analysis, and writing.

SECTION I: THE CURRICULUM:

Total: 11-13 courses: students can double count between sections B and C but must take at least 11 courses total.

Part A: Core (1 course)

Promotes skills in reading, writing, research, and analyzing texts; prompts students and faculty to consider how various disciplines come together to promote understanding of “the human condition.”

1) FYP: 1 course. retains its present form

Part B: Divisional Distributions (10 courses)

Promotes breadth of knowledge about the social and natural world, and key skills in analysis, literacy, and numeracy.

- For the purposes of this scheme, Divisions 3 and 4 are defined as one Division, and Psychology is considered to be part of Division 2.
- students must take at least 4 courses in the division of their major, from at least 2 different departments, OUTSIDE of their major.
- For the remaining two divisions, students must take at least 3 courses in 2 different departments.
- Of the total of 10 courses required in this section, at least 2 must be above the intro level, and outside the major (i.e. if a student was majoring in Political Science, he/she would have to take at least 2 classes, above the intro level, in departments other than political science)

Part C: Key Ways of Knowing

Ensures that students touch base with a few key ways of knowing the world, intellectual skills. These classes can double count with section 2: The students must take courses in each of the following ways of knowing the world:

- at least one course in physical or natural science with a lab;
- at least one course in quantitative reasoning;
- at least one course in historical ways of knowing;
- at least one involving significant analysis of primary literary texts (includes non-fictional texts as, for instance, in philosophy, history of political thought, history of sociological/anthropological thought; exploration of religious texts etc.

- at least 2 courses dealing with linguistic and cultural complexity as defined in Idea I. This category includes courses in any discipline covering (DEFINED THE SAME WAY AS IDEA 1):

SECTION II: EXPLANATION:

The chief advantage of this option is to give greater flexibility through making requirements relatively simple. Greater student choice will require more active faculty advising but should also prompt students to take an active interest in their own education and to move away from the “check box” mentality.

Many of the points made about Idea I also apply here and will not be repeated. These include:

- The advantages of promoting greater choice for students and avoiding “conscript” classes
- The advantages of moving away from the idea that there is an essential core of knowledge that every student should know
- The advantages of moving away from the West/non-West opposition
- The advantages of allowing greater flexibility for ways of making connections between disciplines and introducing disciplines

This curriculum retains our present emphasis on key ways of knowing the world but broadens these categories somewhat to allow for participation from various disciplines and to give students greater choice. The expanded categories also reflect the trend toward greater methodological and theoretical convergence across disciplines:

- quantitative reasoning requirement potentially includes courses in computer engineering, computer science, and philosophy with symbolic and mathematical reasoning being the primary focus of the course.
- the literature category has been expanded to include a more general category of courses involving close examination of any kind of primary literary texts, not just fiction. Examining such works also fosters key skills in analyzing texts.
- historical ways of knowing category has been expanded beyond history and classics to include other disciplines (e.g. art history, history of music, history of literature and so on) also taking a historical perspective.
- Social sciences are not specifically included as a key way of knowing since the divisional distributions make it impossible to avoid taking a social science course
- Creative expression is not specifically included since such a requirement would require additional staffing. But courses in visual and performing arts could be taken under divisional distributions

