

GE Topical Breadth – Course Approval Description – Draft 11-17-07

I. Regulations

The U.C. Davis Requirements for Higher Degrees, Section 522, sets forth the Baccalaureate Degree Requirements in General Education. Topical Breadth is one of two components (522-A). The Topical Breadth component shall be separated into three subject matter areas: Arts and Humanities, Science and Engineering, and Social Sciences (522A-1). The Topical Breadth component shall be satisfied by passing between 12 and 20 units of courses in each subject matter area, for a total of 52 units from all three areas (522-B).

Course units that satisfy requirements in the candidate's major may also earn credit toward satisfaction of General Education requirements (522-D-1). While some courses may be certified in more than one of the three Topical Breadth areas, no student may count a given course in more than one subject matter area (522-D-2). No course may be used by a student toward the satisfaction of more than one of the four Core Literacies (522-D-3). However, with the exception of the 8 units of designated English Composition coursework, a course offered toward the satisfaction of the Core Literacies component may also be offered in satisfaction of the Topical Breadth component (522-D-4).

Regulation 523, Criteria for General Education Certification (523-A), states: Any undergraduate course carrying credit toward graduation is eligible for assignment to a Topical Breadth area if it takes a critical, analytical perspective on knowledge, considering how knowledge has been acquired, and the assumptions, theories, or paradigms that guide its interpretation. Where appropriate, a course may be assigned to more than one Topical Breadth area, and most courses are expected to be assigned to one or more areas.

II. Interpretation

The objective of the Topical Breadth component is to promote the intellectual growth of all undergraduates by ensuring that they acquire a breadth of knowledge and experiences represented by coursework outside of the area of the student's major.

Topical breadth courses are grouped into three broad subject areas of knowledge:

1. **Arts and Humanities.** Courses in this area provide students with knowledge of significant intellectual traditions, cultural achievements and historical processes.
2. **Science and Engineering.** Courses in this area provide students with knowledge of major scientific ideas and applications. They seek to communicate the scope, power, limitations and appeal of science.
3. **Social Sciences.** Courses in this area provide students with knowledge of the individual, social, political and economic activities of people.

The department or program listing courses in the catalog should recommend which of the above three subject matter areas is most appropriate for each course that takes a critical, analytical perspective on knowledge, considering how knowledge has been acquired, and the assumptions,

theories, or paradigms that guide its interpretation. Most undergraduate courses should be appropriate for assignment to an area of GE Topical Breadth.

Education Abroad Program courses may be used to satisfy GE topical breadth requirements if they meet these criteria.

When a sufficient claim can be made that a course should be certified in more than one topical breadth area, this is allowed. However, a student may count such a course in only one Topical Breadth area. Education Abroad Program courses may be used to satisfy breadth requirements, if and only if they meet the other requirements for a GE breadth course.

The 52 units required for Topical Breadth are expected to be distributed as 20 within the area of the student's major and 32 divided between the other two areas, with no fewer than 12 in any area.